AL FAJR

16 PAGES
IS 40

# JERUSALEM

PALESTINIAN WEEKLY

(USPS 686-630

MARCH 7, 1984
VOL. V. NO. 201

**TO OUR READERS:**

**In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the guise of the much criticized "Emergency Regulations" of 1945, Al-Fajr is required to submit all material prepared for publication in this weekly, and also in the Arabic Daily and Bi-Weekly Hebrew Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on pages labeled with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.**

# 'TNT' Wounds 7 in Ramallah Bus Ambush

Seven Palestinians were wounded March 4 when three or four armed men opened fire on a bus of workers. The Israeli terrorist organisation TNT claimed responsibility.

The attackers, who escaped by car, fired submachine guns as the bus turned onto a road near the Israeli settlement of Kawkab Sabah at 5:45 am. There were 18 workers on the bus, all from Mazra'a al-Sharqiya.

Rawdi Mohammed Fayez Hijazi, 20, who was wounded in the arm and head told *Al Fajr* that the bus was travelling east of Asour mountain when workers heard sounds of shooting. "Some workers attempted to look through the windows but noticed nothing as volleys of gunshots were aimed at them." Hijazi said that the attackers shot at the driver in an attempt to drive the bus out of control into the valley. "The shooting lasted for two minutes and I was knocked unconscious," Hijazi said. Israeli reports said three attackers ambushed the bus from the front.

Mazra'a residents were soon on the scene and took the wounded to Ramallah Hospital. Israeli security forces sealed the hospital to journalists, claiming that press reports would negatively affect the course of investigations. Local Palestinian newspapers quoting eyewitnesses reported that the attackers were wearing masks and khaki-coloured clothing.

An anonymous Hebrew-speaking caller phoned a morning Israeli newspaper and said the 'Shlomo Ben Yousef Brigade of TNT,' (Terror Against Terror) was responsible of the attack. Police sources described the attack as an 'act of revenge' for the grenade attack that took place in Jaffa Road, West Jerusalem, last week. They reportedly threatened "this is just the beginning" and that "Jewish blood is not cheap." Shlomo Ben Yousef was hanged by the British authorities in 1938 after bombing an Arab bus. Rawdi Hijazi and Mohammed Rashid Raja, 44, also hit in the head and left arm, are still in Ramallah Hospital and their conditions are termed "fair." Muhammed Shalabi, 53, who was hit in the left shoulder, was transferred to Hadassa Hospital, West Jerusalem. His condition was described as "serious."

Tawfiq Mohammed Abd al-Majed, 25, received shrapnel wounds to his face and stomach; Mahmoud Khalil Hijazi, 63, was injured in the right arm; Abd al-Karim Hassan Rabah, 22, received similar wounds and Abd al-Majid Abd al-Qader Shalabi, 60, had bruises on his face. They were all released after receiving medical treatment.

Mazra'a al-Sharqiya village council convened an emergency meeting on the day of the shooting and issued a statement denouncing the incident. They called upon all international organisations to "intervene to support West Bank residents who are continuously harassed by settlers." Editorials in *Al Fajr* and *Al Sha'ab* didn't appear on the following day.

A victim of the terrorist shooting incident on the Mazra'a Sharqiyya bus, waiting for treatment at the Ramallah Hospital/AG photo

Ramallah shopkeepers and students struck March 6, responding to the attack on the workers. An Israeli military bus and another belonging to Egged were stoned in town the same day. Both windscreens were smashed but no injuries were reported.

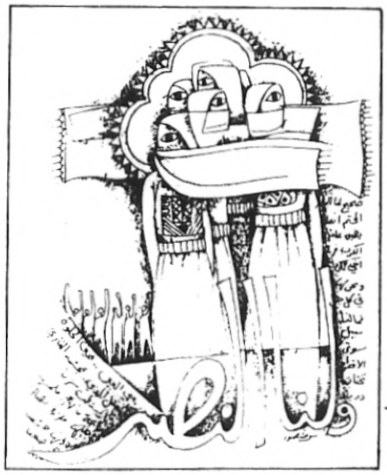
At least 14 bomb attacks in various parts of the West Bank, including the bombing of Christian and Muslim institutions in Jerusalem, Azariya and Hebron, have been attributed to TNT. One nun and three *imams* have been injured in the blasts.

Zuhdi Tarazi, PLO representative at the UN, submitted March 5 a memo to the UN Security Council protesting the acts of terror against the civilian population under occupation.

Israeli reports, March 6, said police arrested seven settlers and two other Israelis on suspicion of carrying out the bus ambush and the attempt last month to blow up al-Asqa Mosque.

# Lawyers Question Legality of Neve Tertza Punishment

Five Palestinian and Israeli lawyers will question before the Israeli High Court in Jerusalem the legality of restrictions imposed on 21 Palestinian women prisoners in Neve Tertza prison and will demand that punishment against the prisoners be cancelled. The Palestinian women have waged a strike since last May 1983 against cooking and serving food to prison guards, which they consider degrading work.



Since then the prison authorities have deprived the women of newspapers, books and access to radio. The twice-monthly, half-hour family visit was reduced to every two months. The women prisoners are confined to their rooms except for one hour in the exercise square.

The lawyers' complaint raises the question to the High Court whether books, newspapers and radio are prisoners' rights or privileges.

Advocate Walid Fahoum from Nazareth, one of the five lawyers involved in the case, told *Al Fajr* that now the law regarding newspapers, books and radio is elastic; sometimes it is used as a privilege and other times as a right. It is currently practised in Ramleh and Beer Sheba prisons as a right. "The criteria is the prisoners' power and their number," Fahoum added. "We want the prosecution to explain why such a means of pressure was practised in Neve Tertza jail," he explained.

Last week, women prisoners told Fahoum, "We won't agree to compromises unless our minimum level of rights are accepted." They complained that they have not received their mail and that their letters to their relatives and friends outside are constantly confiscated. They asked for support from public opinion and international organisations.

According to advocate Fahoum, two weeks ago Rawda Jamil Baser from Ramallah who is serving an eight-year sentence and Rabiha Diyab from Jerusalem who is serving a 44-month sentence met Rifka Levi, who said she was from the legal advisor's office of the prison authority. Rifka claimed the women prisoners' strike was illegal and asked them to end it.

Rawda told Fahoum that a calendar was confiscated January 30 because it includes a photograph of former prisoner Terese Halaseh and Mahmoud Darwish's poetry.

In 1977 women prisoners struck for 12 days to protest against sewing clothes for policewomen. Palestinian strikers were not forced to do the job.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
March 8

Due to the continuing devaluation in the Israeli currency and to the inflation rate (estimated this year at 473 percent), Al Fajr now sells for IS75.

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# Gemayel Ditches May 17 Accord, Factions Reshuffle for Next Round of Talks

by Livia Rokach

Amin Gemayel abrogated the US-sponsored May 17 Lebanese-Israeli accord, which was aimed at transforming Lebanon into an Israeli protectorate in every respect, thus awarding Israel a long-coveted prize for its June 1982 invasion of Lebanon. But the abrogation of the accord, which was preceded by the withdrawal of the US-led multinational force in Beirut — though representing definite, even sensational successes for the Lebanese national popular forces who had materially achieved them, at a high cost in human lives and destruction, and for the Syrian regime which backed the fight and conducted a far-sighted political game on the international and regional levels — far from resolves in itself the problems of Lebanon or brings to an end the struggle of the Lebanese people for independence, democracy and equality.

The abrogation of the accord was announced in Beirut by a presidential spokesperson in early afternoon March 5, shortly before the expiration of an ultimatum by Lebanese national resistance leader Walid Jumblatt, who had given Gemayel 48 hours to scrap the accord or face intensified military attacks on his forces in east Beirut and its adjacent Maronite enclave. The formal decision to abrogate the accord with Israel was taken by Gemayel jointly with the members of the Shafiq Wazzan cabinet, which had resigned on February 3, but in the meeting held this morning March 5 it decided to retract its resignation and resume its activities until a new "government of national reconciliation" can be set up.

Gemayel's abrogation of the accord, which was squeezed out of the Phalangist president in his meetings in Damascus on Wednesday and Thursday with Syrian Preside... Hafez al-Assed, was announced as the precarious, Saudi and Syrian-imposed ceasefire, which came in force yesterday at 9:00 pm, showed clear signs of cracking up. In fact, after a night of relative calm, at mid-morning today fighting flared up again along the "green line," where a French paratrooper was killed in the crossfire, and in the Shouf sector of Souq al-Gharb. The commander of the 100-Marine garrison which remained in Beirut to protect the US Embassy, Colonel Dale Dorman, was seriously injured by unidentified armed elements ... west Beirut, 50 metres away from the embassy. At 7:00 am and 1:00 pm, Israeli jets carried out two 15-minute airstrikes on the Druze towns of Aley and Bhamdoun, already largely destroyed in previous Israeli bombings and in the fighting of past months.

In this present, very relative lull in the fighting, which few doubt will be followed by a third round of war, attention is centered on the analysis of the events which have led up to the abrogation of the Lebanese-Israeli accord and the ceasefire and on the prospects for a revival of the Geneva talks, euphemistically named "of national reconciliation." According to sources in Damascus and in east Beirut, the talks, which were suspended in early November 1983, may be resumed as of March 12, in Lausanne. This is undoubtedly the will of the Syrian regime which, in exchange for the abrogation of the accord, has granted Amin Gemayel and his Phalangist power a rehabilitation, which is in sharp contrast with the wishes of most Lebanese. On the right, 'Lebanese Forces' rightist coalition leader Camille Chamoun declared himself reluctant to take part in the conference "on terms dictated by Syria." In a related development, the 'Lebanese Forces' coopted in their three-member 'Supreme Command Council' Samir Giagia, renowned for the massacre of members of the Franjieh family in Zgharta in June 1978, the author of innumerable massacres by Phalangist militias in Druze villages in the Shouf following the Israeli invasion, and a relentless supporter of collaboration with Israel at all costs.

At the same time, there has been no confirmation yet from PSP and Amal leaders Walid Jumblatt and Nabih Berri that they will participate in the Lausanne talks. On the contrary, in an interview published today in the French Catholic daily *La Croix*, Walid Jumblatt reiterates the position repeatedly expressed by both himself and the Shi'ite leader, namely that "there will be neither Geneva-II nor Geneva-III as long as Amin Gemayel will not resign and be put on trial for the crimes committed against the Lebanese people. We shall never be able to reach an agreement with a Phalangist president." In today's interview, Jumblatt further states "the need to expose and define what has happened in just over one year of Phalangist power: the massacres in the mountains, the destruction and massacrs in the southern neighbourhoods of Beirut, the thousands of *desaparecidos* in the hands of the Phalangists."

Commenting on Amin Gemayel's visit to Damascus, where the Phalangist president was well received, Jumblatt said that the visit was "a total victory for Syrian politics, but this has nothing to do with the Lebanese problems. The abrogation of the accord was the only argument discussed between Assad and Gemayel. But this is far from sufficient for the Lebanese people."

In past months, and through the evolution of the military balance of power in favour of the Lebanese national resistance forces, thanks to their fighting — with limited Syrian backing — it was clear to the patriotic leadership that their tactical alliance with Damasucs may come to an end once the common goal of the abrogation of the accord and the withdrawal of the US-led MNF was reached.

Substantially, therefore, last week's events did not come altogether as a surprise to the Lebanese resistance forces. Nor could they be surprise by the Syrian success in splitting the national salvation alliance, with both Maronite Suleiman Franjieh and Tripoli's Sunni leader Rashid Karameh blindly acquiescing to the Assad-Gemayel pact. Differences in the positions of the latter two and those of Walid Jumblatt, who, on the other hand, has recently reinforced his alliance with Nabih Berri (whose organisation, Amal, had never joined the LNSF, precisely for fear of excessive Syrian intervention in the front's affairs) have been visibly growing since the Geneva conference in November. Elements of surprise were contained, however, in certain concrete aspects of these events, such as the actual abrogation of the accord by Amin Gemayel, the lack of a more consistent opposition to the abrogation on the part of the Phalangist party, and — perhaps more than anything — the extent to which the Syrian regime "relegitimised" the politically defunct president and his Wazzan cabinet. Another, and not a minor, surprise must have occured to the opposition as a whole from the manner in which Damascus seems to pretend to totally 'Syrianise' the next session of the Lebanese conference in Switzerland, if leaks regarding a "compromise reform programme," based on Franjieh's proposls in 1976 and a promise to Gemayel to "confessionalise" the conference by including among its participants representatives of the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, conform to the truth.

Evidently, beyond the abrogation of the Lebanese-Israeli accord and its implications on the regional level, a new phase is about to begin as far as the Lebanese conflict is concerned, and many questions concerning this new phase remain open for the moment. It is, for example, difficult to evaluate, as yet, the spaces which remain open, notwithstanding the Syrian attitudes, for the continued struggle of the major forces of the Lebanese resistance who do not intend to surrender the fundamental rights of their communities and people. A large number of military as well as political factors will also determine whether what at present is a political dissent would risk to be transformed into an all-out confrontation between a newly born Lebanese nationalism and Syria, along the lines of developments in Eritrea. Undoubtedly none of the parties, except possibly the Phalangists and Israel, would have an interest in similar developments. But certain games, when stretched beyond a measure of tolerability against the rights and the freedoms of the people may, and often do, get out of hand. Events in the coming weeks, first among which the answer to whether a "reconciliation" conference would take place, and if so, how and with whom, will tell.

# 12 Israelis Hit in Sidon Resistance Attack

by Livia Rokach

Hundreds of Lebanese civilians were arrested yesterday in Sidon during a round-up after the occupation forces suffered 12 casualties in a three-phase attack by resistance commandos on a patrol in the port area.

According to eyewitnesses and journalists who arrived on the spot within minutes of the attack, the patrol, composed of two jeeps and an armoured vehicle, was first hit by rocket-propelled grenades at 9:15 am. The armoured vehicle received a direct rocket hit and caught fire. Reinforcements immediately arrived on the spot, shooting indiscriminately. A few seconds later, however, they also came under RPG fire and five minutes later another rocket hit the rest of the force. The eyewitness reports said one hour later the 12 immobile bodies of occupation soldiers were still lying at the site of the attack. The testimonies are in full contrast with an occupation command communique, according to which the attack was executed with remote-controlled explosive charges.

Later March 4 an armoured personnel carrier of the occupation forces was blown up by a land mine near Ba'alul, near Qara'un, in the Beqa'a valley. The attack caused four casualties.

On Saturday, occupation troops killed two Lebanese civilians travelling in a car on the Sidon road. A communique later said the car was shot at because the driver "refused to stop at a checkpoint," a version considered highly unlikely by local Lebanese police sources.

With the March 4 attack, the losses of the occupation forces in south Lebanon amount to 18 in the week Monday February 27-Sunday March 3.

On Monday, February 27, an occupation forces patrol suffered four casualties in an attack with automatic arms near Gazieh, six kilometres south of Sidon. An hour later, the intelligence services and frontier guards headquarters in the centre of Sidon was attacked with RPG's. There were no reports on casualties. On Tuesday, two soldiers were killed when a patrol was ambushed near Arab Selim, six kilometres north of Nabatiya.

As was predictable, the popular resistance in south Lebanon has been reacting vigourously to the repression excercised by the occupation forces in past weeks and in particular to the assassination in mid-February of Sheikh Harb, the religious leader of Jibshit, and arrests, disappearances, and destructions of homes of suspected militants throughout the occupied areas.

# UNRWA Concerned Over Refugees

UNRWA's Commissioner-General Olof Rydbeck expressed concern, in a recent UNRWA press statement, over an upsurge of violent incidents involving Palestine refugees in Lebanon. He appealed to those who have effective control in the various areas in Lebanon to do everything in their power to protect the lives of civilians.

Over the past few months there has been a marked increase in arrests, disappearances, violent assaults including murders and explosions affecting Palestine refugees in Lebanon. Rydbeck said that the recent violence shows that the security of Palestine refugees in Lebanon is still a matter of serious concern.

## THIS WEEKS CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 201, March 7, 1984:

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of articles submitted to censors | 28 |
| Number of articles totally censored out | 8 |
| Number of articles returned | 1 |
| Number of articles lost | 1 |
| Number of articles mutilated beyond use | 1 |
| Number of articles partially censored but used | 1 |
| Number of articles passed | 16 |

# Palestinian–Jordanian Talks End with Promise to Continue

Palestinian and Jordanian leaders in Amman agreed March 1 to continue dialogue to reach a mutual political stand based on the accords adopted at the 12th Arab Summit at Fez, Morocco in February 1983. The two sides, headed by Yasir Arafat, chairperson of the PLO Executive Committee, and by Ahmad Obeidat, the Jordanian prime minister, stressed in a joint communique "the distinguished mutual relations between Palestinians and Jordanians in past, present and future." The statement added that "the Palestinian side explained the Palestine National Council (PNC) resolutions and both sides agreed to resume dialogue to crystalise a mutual stand and to organise the relations on a stable balanced base."

The Palestinian-Jordanian statement stressed the importance and neccessity to support the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to resume efforts in all international forums to carry out the Fez Summit accords.

Both sides discussed political stands of occupied territories residents in supporting the PLO and its leadership and their absolute support for the independent Palestinian decision-making. The summit participants agreed to adopt various procedures to ease the situation of Palestinian residents. The statement did not illustrate the nature of these procedures. Both sides also agreed to resume the work of the Palestinian-Jordanian Joint Steadfastness Committee, which was established after the Baghdad Summit to funnel support for the people under occupation. They agreed to mandate a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to visit Arab countries to discuss unpaid financial commitments made to the fund. Both sides also agreed to initiate international political efforts.

Khalil Wazir (Abu Jihad), the deputy commander of PLO forces and Jawad Anani, the Jordanian minister of industry and commerce, will visit Arab countries to collect donations for residents of the occupied territories. Meanwhile the joint committee started its meetings last week.

Members of the joint committee agreed to set up marketing facilities for West Bank industrial and agricultural products in Arab countries.

Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), member of the PLO Executive Committee, said March 3 that a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation will visit the Soviet Union in the near future to urge Moscow to renew its call for the convention of an international conference in which all parties would attend to solve the Palestinian problem.

Abu Mazen, who currently is visiting Arab Gulf states, said that the visit to the Soviet Union is within the framework of coordination between Jordanians and Palestinians.

He added that the Soviet initiative introduced by former President Leonid Brezhnev guarantees the rights of the Palestinian people, including the establishment of an independent state. The Brezhenev plan acknowledges independence and sovereignty and secure borders for all Middle East countries.

Local press reaction to the results of the Amman meetings were mixed, ranging from *Al Quds* daily calling it an unqualified success to *Al Mithaq*, which criticised the Palestinian participation as individually-based. Both *Al Fajr* and *Al Sha'ab* reiterated the necessity of Jordan staying withing the boundaries of previous Palestine National Council resolutions and keeping the independence of Palestinian decision-making.

# Najah Employees Hold Crisis Meeting

Two hundred Najah University teachers and employees conferred March 3 to discuss the current crisis threatening academic life at the university. Najah University has been closed by its board of trustees after clashes between student factions February 19.

The Najah University Employees Union, which called teachers and employees to attend the conference through ads in the local press, called for a quick investigation of the events of February 19 by a neutral and unbiased committee to issue proper punishment against those who created chaos and violated the university constitution.

The conference attendants also discussed regulations and proposals for solving similar troubles which might occur at the university in the future. They called teachers and members of the administration to submit written proposals and opinions for changes in the current regulations at the university.

The employees insisted that the practice of academic freedom and freedom of expression must be guaranteed to all students. They stressed the necessity to preserve university property.

Some teachers and employees who talked in the conference stated that a spirit of solidarity must be maintained between all university organs and student blocs. Many suggested that restrictions must be levied on the use of microphones and the mosque for incitement.

Taysir Maswadeh, head of the Employees Union, told *Al Fajr* they sent two letters to Najah's Board of Trustees and Council of Deans demanding that the university provide a proper academic atmosphere and that the employees are not ready to work in an atmosphere of terror.

Maswadeh, from Najah's business college, condemned the Islamic student bloc as "the source of the university's troubles since 1981." Maswadeh said, "We need a radical solution, including improvements in the university's regulations. For instance, the university council has not yet convened to discuss the university's crisis."

A permanent investigation committee consisting of five teachers and the chairperson of the students general assembly has been authorised to collect information and to report on the incidents. Maswadeh said that according to an agreement between the student council and the administration reached earlier last month, sanctions have been frozen.

Violence erupted on campus when Islamic bloc members attacked students celebrating the second anniversary of the foundation of the Palestine Communist Party.

# Local Unions Slam ILO After Shun

A leading West Bank, unionist blasted the UN International Labour Organisation (ILO) for shunning the West Bank Federation of Labour Unions during a visit to the area last week.

George Hazboun, public relations director of the West Bank Federation of Labour Unions accused the ILO of reneging on previous promises to contact and coordinate the visit with local unionists.

In a telephone interview with *Al Fajr*, Hazboun explained that the Geneva-based organisation by-passed the Federation of Labour during a visit last year and spoke, instead, to non-union organisations. Local unions sent official complaints to the ILO's headquarters in Geneva. According to Hazboun it was agreed that before the next visit the ILO would coordinate with the West Bank Labour Union Federation.

The three-member delegation toured a number of West Bank institutions, including the Bethlehem municipality and the Hebron Chamber of Commerce. Hanna Naser, deputy mayor of Bethlehem and owner of a textile factory told *Al Fajr* he briefed the delegation about the conditions of Palestinian workers in the West Bank and about the economic situation in general.

The ILO, a branch of the UN, concentrates on defending Labour unions throughout the world. Delegations from the ILO make yearly inquiries into the conditions of workers world wide, and present recomendations to the UN.

Hazboun remarked that, following last years trip, the ILO submitted a report to the UN on the conditions of Palestinian workers. The report, which was distributed throughout the world, suggested that the solution to the Palestinian workers problems is to have them incorporated within the Israeli Labour Federation (Histadrut).

Hazboun called last years report as "taking the Israeli point of view."

In the early '80s the USA withdrew from the ILO accusing it of anti-Israel bias. They later rejoined.

# BZU Student Town Arrested

Israeli military authorities in the Gaza Strip placed Walid Zaqut, 23, a Bir Zeit University student under town arrest for six months starting February 23.

Zaqut, a freshman in the college of Business Administration, was summoned to the military headquarters in Gaza February 23 and handed the order. The order, signed by the military governor of the Gaza Strip, instructed him to remain within Gaza city limits during the day time, and to his home at night. He is also required to sign in at the local police station everyday. No reason was given for the restriction.

Zaqut says he has never been charged with political activity. He spent five months in jail in 1983 but was released for lack of evidence.

# Fara'a Prison Guard Finedfor Torture

Tel Aviv district court convicted an Israeli policeman February 13 of beating two Palestinian prisoners, both university lecturers, at Fara'a detention camp, in the Jenin district. Another policeman is scheduled to go on trial March 20 on similar charges.

Mohammed Gadir, a policeman serving at Fara'a detention camp was given six months suspended sentence and fined IS15,000. He was found guilty of beating up two university lecturers when they were held at the detention centre in March last year. Adel Yahya, a lecturer at Najah University, and Adnan Salqan, a Bir Zeit University lecturer, were badly beaten by Gadir and other prison officials. Lawyer Felicia Langer who first disclosed the case said that the Israeli court justified the mild sentence with the excuse that the policeman has no previous record.

The trial of the second policeman, Moshe Biton, also a guard at Fara'a, is scheduled to start on March 20. Biton is being charged with torturing Walid al-A'ardah, an Arrabeh teacher and son of the town's mayor.

The Israeli Communist Party daily, *Al Ittihad*, reported February 22 that Khalid Ghazal, a worker at the Nablus electricity company, and Hassan Dahdouh, both from Nablus, were badly tortured by Israeli policemen at Fara'a. The two men were arrested during demonstrations in Nablus following the shooting death of Nasser Sarisi last January 28.

Fara'a detention camp was opened in 1981 as a punitive detention centre particularly for youths prior to trial. Prior to 1967 it was a Jordanian military camp.

# Khalaf Released from Town Arrest

The elected mayor of Ramallah, Karim Khalaf, was freed from town arrest and exile and allowed to leave Jericho February 29. He had been restricted for two years.

Khalaf, who lost a foot in a bomb attack in 1980, was ordered confined to Jericho on March 27, 1982, one week after being dismissed from office.

The mayor never received a written order placing him under town arrest but each time he tried to travel, he was barred and verbally reminded that he was under town restriction.

After his release from town arrest Israeli 'civil administration' spokespeople reportedly denied that Khalaf had been placed under town arrest. Khalaf replied, "If that claim is right, they would not need to issue an order lifting the ban."

The 46-year-old lawyer was removed from office after refusing to deal with the Israeli 'civil administration.' Bassam Shaka'a, elected mayor of Nablus who was dismissed at the same time, remains under *de facto* town arrest.

Mayor of Anabta Wahid Hamdallah had his town arrest renewed for the ninth time last week. Hamdallah, who was also fired from his post in 1982 for refusing to deal with the 'civil administration,' was detained for one month, earlier this year, but released without charge.

# Hebron Prison Strikers Call for Support

Two-hundred-and-fifty Palestinian prisoners in Hebron appealed February 27 to international organisations and all concerned institutions in the occupied territories to accelerate their support for prisoners in Hebron prison who have been on strike since June 1983 to demand improvements in their living conditions.

Hebron prison authorities refuse all demands made by the prisoners and, prisoners report, are using all means of pressure to break the strike. Hebron prison is known in the West Bank for its particularly miserable conditions.

The Palestinian prisoners are demanding the reinstatement of the prisoners' exercise square, that adequate and palatable food be provided, barbed wire be removed from the family visit rooms, overcrowdedness in cells be relieved and health conditions of prisoners be improved.

The prisoners' report documented incidents of repression such as 24-hour confinement to cells, spraying tear gas on prisoners, stealing the food rations sent for prisoners, constant searches of prisoners' rooms and maintaining collaborators and using them to create acts of provocation against political prisoners (Translation: Al Ittihad, Al Fajr, February 27, 1984).

# Jaffa Road Bomb Injures 21

One Israeli was seriously injured and 20 others were slightly injured when a number of hand grenades exploded February 28 outside a Jerusalem clothing shop on Jaffa street in West Jerusalem.

Zvi Rotem, Israeli police spokesman for the Jerusalem district, told *Al Fajr* that police are checking the possibility that the blast was the work of the Israeli criminals as part of a personal vendetta. Rotem, who would not say how many grenades were found, admitted that investigators are "checking this avenue because the hand grenades used are a common weapon possessed and used by the underworld." The spokesman would not comment on the police round-up of Palestinians in the area after the explosion or give details of the investigation.

# Soldier Refuses WB Service

An Israeli reserve soldier was jailed February 28 for 21 days for refusing to serve in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967.

Naftali Orr-Nerr, 37, a member of *Yesh Gvul* (There's a Limit) and reserve corporal from Jerusalem, refused to join his infantry unit serving in the West Bank for reasons of conscience. Orr-Nerr told his friends that he is refusing service because "the time has come to stop opressing Palestinians and to start talking to them."

*Yesh Gvul* movement counts 2000 reserve Israeli soldiers among its members who refuse to serve in Lebanon. Recently some members have decided to refuse service in the West Bank and Gaza as well.

A *Yesh Gvul* source told *Al Fajr* that the movement is preparing to campaign strongly in support of Orr-Nerr and others who are refusing service in the Palestinian occupied territories.

## YOUTH JAILED FOR FLAGS, CLAIM TORTURE

Israeli police detained two Palestinian youths from Nazareth February 29 on charges of raising the Palestinian flag during a demonstration on the first anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. The two youths complained to their lawyer that the police forced confessions from them.

## NORWEGIAN CO-OPS BAN ISRAELI GOODS

OSLO — Oslo's Student Welfare Association has forbidden its three department stores to sell goods produced in Israel.

The sale was planned as part of an Israeli Week by the store operators, selling produce bought at discount prices.

The board's ground for deciding to boycott Israeli goods was that Israel "is discriminating against Palestinian and Lebanese citizens living under occupation." (AP)

# 19 Jailed for Resistance

Nineteen Palestinian youths from camps and towns in the West Bank were convicted by military courts in Ramallah and Nablus and sentenced for varying terms of imprisonment last week on security charges.

The three youths from Fawwar refugee camp, south of Hebron, were convicted by the Ramallah court on charges of membership in an illegal organisation and attempting to prepare explosives. Usama Najar was sentenced to one year in jail and two years suspended, Mohammed Darabishi was sentenced to eight months activated imprisonment and 28 months suspended and Jibril Sarahneh was sentenced to eight months with 26 months suspended. Nasser Amr from Dura who was charged with belonging to the same group was sentenced for one and a half years in jail and one and a half years suspended.

Three days earlier, the Ramallah military court convicted Said Abu Ajamieh, 18, and Ziad Titi, 18, from Fawwar camp on charges of attempting to contact a member of a PLO faction. The two youths were charged also for incitement, hoisting a Palestinian flag and writing slogans condemning the Reagan plan. Titi was sentenced for one year in jail and another suspended; Ajamieh was given five months in jail and seven months on suspension.

The Nablus military court sentenced February 26 three young men from Nablus to severe sentences on charges of throwing a firebomb at an Israeli military vehicle. Abd al-Fattah Fawzi Habash, Imad Hindi and Ahmad Abu Ghazaleh were sentenced to three years in jail. The same court sentenced Wasef Juma'a from Nablus for three months in jail and 12 months suspended on security charges.

On the same day, nine youths from Jalazon refugee camp, in the Ramallah district, were sentenced by Ramallah military court to varying terms for belonging to a political local organisation and carrying out activities which violate the public order. The sentences levied on Jalazon youths ranged between 70 days and four years. Two youths: Mohammed Ali Malkeh, 24, and Saleh Musa Nakhleh, 24, were sentenced to three and four years in prison respectively. Malkeh and Nakhleh were accused of attempting to throw stones and firebombs at Israeli vehicles, distributing leaflets, drawing swastika signs on walls inside Jalazon camp and attempting to contact an illegal organisation.

Other youths, Wadie Hasanein, 23, Khaled Ahmad Saleh, 22, and Mohammed Badawi Ziad, 14, received two years in jail and two suspended. Jamal Badawi Salem, 21, and Ali Nakhleh, 20, received 4 years; two and a half years were made active. Omar Faris Nakhleh, 25, was sentenced to three years in prison, one and a half suspended, and Nabil Abd al-Rahman Hasanein, 14, was charged with attempting to contact the above accused and "thinking about" throwing Molotovs at Israeli vehicles on the Ramallh-Nablus road. Hasanein was given 70 days in jail and 90 days suspended sentence.

# 29 Israelis Fined for Ramallah Protest

Twenty-nine members of the Israeli Committee of Solidarity with Bir Zeit University were fined IS10,000 each March 1 in the Jerusalem Magistrates Court for participating in a demonstration in Ramallah two years ago, following the military closure of BZU. It was the first Israeli organised protest in the occupied territories against the occupation. The Israeli troops and border police used tear gas on their fellow Israelis to disperse the group, which provoked wide comment in the Hebrew press at the time.

The original charge related to "disturbances," "offending the public peace" and "incitement of the local population," in addition to the fact that a police permit was not obtained for the demonstration. After six prosecution witnesses gave contradictory testimonies and Dr. Avi 'Ozz, organiser of the event, testified for the defendants, a compromise formula was reached. The defendants pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of participation in an unlicensed demonstration and all other charges were dropped. Both Dr. Avi 'Ozz and defendant 'Oded Pilavski emphasised that the group came to peacefully demonstrate and that not all Israelis agree with with occupation and the closure of academic institutions. They said the non-violent group was instead dispersed by force and pursued by tear gas grenades along Ramallah streets until their arrest. Originally 49 Israelis were arrested.

During the trial the officer who directed the military action, among others, said that it was uncomfortable for Israeli troops to arrest Israelis wanting to go on excursions in the West Bank, even if it was declared a "closed area," like he had done that day. The prosecution also raised the point that locals started to throw stones at everybody, including the demonstrators, the troops and the nearby crowds. In contrary testimony, Dr. 'Ozz emphasised how "warm and friendly" the local population's response was both to the demonstration before the first tear gas grenade was shot and when everyone ran from the pursuing shots. The 29 Israelis were each fined IS10,000 to be paid within 14 days and signed an additional pledge not to violate the same article of the law within one year.

The original charges, which included raising olive branches, were dropped.

# After Destroying Evidence Settlers Get Suspended Prison Terms

The Jerusalem District Court gave out suspended prison sentences February 28 to two heads of the Kiryat Arba settlement's local council after convicting them of disrupting the legal process by destroying a sabotage device they found in the Kiryat Arba municipal building. One was also convicted of illegally possessing weapons. The prosecution claimed the sabotage device was, perhaps, connected with the harming of the mayors (car bomb attacks on three West Bank mayors in 1980) but the judge indicated that tying the defendants' names with that of fence was not justified.

Moshe Rosenthal, the former security officer of Kiryat Arba, was sentenced to six months suspended imprisonment and Ze'ev Friedman, who served as deputy council head, was sentenced to nine months suspended.

An electrician working on the local council building discovered the hidden sabotage device in a hole in the wall in March 1982. The device included a wooden frame, magnets, a set of electric activation wires and two Israeli army-issue explosive blocks. The electrician called the defendants, who took the device away with them and a while later destroyed it.

The court acquitted the two of the more severe charge of destroying evidence in order to stop a legal investigation (the maximum punishment is 5 years imprisonment) and reduced it to disrupting a legal process (carrying a maximum sentence of three years).

In his verdict, District Judge Shalom Brenner stated that he didn't believe the defendants' statement that their only motivation was their wish to "eliminate the slandering of Kiryat Arba." In his opinion, their joint decision not to give the device to the police was aimed mainly at stopping the investigation, that could, perhaps, lead to someone from Kiryat Arba. (Translation: Yediot Aharanot, HaAretz, Al Hamishmar, February 29, 1984).

The Dawn

**Al Fajr**

AL FAJR – Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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Al Fajr was founded in 1972 by Yusef Nasr, who edited the paper until his kidnapping in 1974. The English edition was first published in April 1980. The Dawn (Al Fajr) Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly (UPS 686630) is published weekly for $50.00 per year by Paul Ajlouny, 16 Crowell St., Hempstead, N.Y. 11550. Second class postage paid at Hempstead, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Al Fajr 2025 I Street N.W., Suite 925, Washington D.C., 20006.

# Making Connections

On March 8 we celebrate women's struggle, past and future, to end their oppression. We believe it is important to focus this day on women's organising efforts rather than on their victimisation. International Women's Day is about women organised – to fight for better working conditions, just pay, a healthy environment, the right to political participation, education and social equality. Under all circumstances, in all countries, women are organising themselves to take control of their own destiny.

In the past year Palestinian women in the occupied territories have made valiant strides in collecting their energies and directing them toward their goal of self-determination, as individuals and as a people. More women have enlisted in local women's committees, finished literacy courses, participated in demonstrations, organised strikes, joined unions, taken jobs outside the home. They have changed their lives: from how their mothers and grandmothers lived to new and collective work outside the realm of home.

The spectre of women actively fighting against the political and social *status quo* threatens many sectors inside and outside the society. And so a women's centre in a West Bank village is burned; women activists are restricted under town arrest; women workers who dare to organise are fired; even women who break tradition and refuse to marry are punished with social ostracisation.

This year's International Women's Day in Palestine has a special focus. Palestinian women political prisoners in Neve Tertza prison are in their ninth month of a strike to protest against 'slave work' of cooking for prison guards. Lawyers have sought to expose the strike-breaking efforts of prison authorities in court and Palestinian women's committees have taken on the role of educating the local community about their sisters-in-struggle. We honour these women, isolated but together, for their strength and the determination the prisoners have shown in their fight, one small facet of a struggle interconnected with all women's struggle for self-determination.

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# US Senators Offer Up Jerusalem As Latest Gift to Israel

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington DC, Correspondent

The US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing February 23 listened to views on a bill submitted by Senator Daniel Moynihan from New York, which, if passed by Congress, would require the move of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The bill was brought to the committee, its chairman Senator Charles Percy of Illinois said, because many senators, including himself, wanted to give the issue more time for discussion than the senate floor would permit. Percy said it was necessary that more information be made available before the senators vote on it.

The US embassy in Israel is located in Tel Aviv since the US has not officially recognised Jerusalem to be part of Israel. The world community, except Zaire and Costa Rica, also do not agree that Jerusalem is part of Israel.

Moynihan, a Democrat argued before the committee that the US must move its embassy to Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. Moynihan, from the state with more Jews than Israel itself, said that Jerusalem is Israel's capital and nothing will change that, suggesting thus that the US must recognise that fact. Arguing against UN resolutions calling for the return of Jerusalem the senator asked, "What is this thing called 'Arab territory' which Israel alleged to occupy? Is there a nation named Arab?... is this the mythic country of Araby, once said to be inhabited by the sheikh thereof?" The comment caught the attention of American reporters, some of whom were made uneasy by the remark – one called it "racist." Answering his own question about the "country of Araby," the senator said, "...but there is surely no sovereign nation named Arab whose territory is capable of being occupied by another sovereignty."

Moynihan also told the committee, "There has been a succession of reports that President Reagan is privately of this view," that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. This is not so, argued Lawrence Eagleburger, under secretary of state for political affairs, relaying a policy of the administration and the state department. Eagleburger also referred to a letter secretary of state George Shultz had sent Percy, outlining administration opposition to this bill, based on constitutional separation of powers.

The letter from Shultz restated US policy that it is the president's constitutional right to grant such recognition as part of conducting US foreign policy and that congress would be wrong in setting such a precedent. US policy since the establishment of Israel has been that West Jerusalem is administered by Israel and that East Jerusalem since 1967 has been occupied by Israel as part of the occupied territories. Jerusalem's final status, the US government position promotes, is to be concluded through negotiations between parties to the Middle East conflict and no unilateral action by one party should alter that status. The US also agrees that the city should not be divided again.

Eagleburger specified other reasons for not supporting the transfer of the embassy to Jerusalem, among them the US role as a peace-broker in the Middle East. Such a move, he continued, "would inevitably convey a message that the US accepted the position of one party" over the other, when a solution to the Middle East conflict in general must be reached through negotiations between all the parties. The status of Jerusalem, Eagleburger went on, is "an integral part of the Arab-Israeli conflict." This bill, if passed and the US embassy did move to Jerusalem, would be seen as bypassing negotiations between the parties to achieve peace.

Arguing against Moynihan's bill in committee were NAAA director David Saad, representatives from the Catholic Church and Greek Orthodox Church, former state department undersecretary for Near Eastern affairs Harold Saunders, and others. NAAA's Saad said, "There is, perhaps, no action that would have a more damaging effect on US relations with the Arab and Islamic worlds, or a worse impact on the search for peace in the Middle East" than this proposal. Saad referred to UN resolutions prohibiting Israel from annexing East Jerusalem, which Israel disregarded when it annexed the east part of the city and declared it to be its capital. He also pointed out that Israel incorporated land never before considered part of Jerusalem and US recognition of that would exclude these lands from future negotiations on a final peace. Saad finally expressed NAAA's concern about increased attacks on Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem and urged the committee to reject this bill.

### "...Arabs can take anything."

To many Americans, certainly US officials and members of Congress, apparently there is no limit to how many insults the Arabs can take and remain passive. This belief is practiced almost daily and in various forms, such as Moynihan's comment about the country of "the sheikh of Araby." This is being done in spite of the presence in this capital city of 20 Arab embassies with their ambassadors and personnel, financed in the millions of dollars by the Arab people.

Unnamed government officials recently told reporters who were questioning about likely Arab reactions to the strategic understanding between Israel and the US, that it is expected that Arabs will criticize and shout for a week or two but then they will return to the US. Senator Charles Biden, a Democrat from Delaware, made a like remark when questioning Eagleburger's testimony on behalf of the administration opposing the embassy move. Eagleburger argued that Arab states may be angered by such a move and may cease to see the US role as impartial. In response to this standard argument, Biden said that Israel is the first among equals of the US friends, adding, "If the Arabs can swallow our policy in Lebanon then they can take anything." The obvious meaning is that the Arab states never reacted in substance to the US siding with the "Christian" Phalange militias nor to the bombarding of "Moslem" towns and cities, nor will they never react to anything the US will do. Sitting in the committee room listening to this were representatives of some of the Arab embassies.

Percy will no doubt make himself a bigger target for Israel's friends in the US. The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is the subject of a letter-writing campaign by US Zionists. Because of his committee's importance, he gained the honor of topping the list of those to be defeated in the coming elections, on the grounds that he is not a friend of Israel. During the hearings, Percy read from the Fourth Geneva conventions, the sections prohibiting an occupying power from annexing territories and from transferring from their place of residence people under occupation. Percy also noted remarks that Samuel Lewis, US ambassador in Tel Aviv, made to Jewish American leaders – that it is an affront to Israel to keep the US embassy in Tel Aviv.

Naturally there were those who testified for the transfer of the embassy to Jerusalem, among them Thomas Dine, director of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), Senator Spector of Pennsylvania, a representative of the International Christian embassy in Jerusalem, the National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel and a reprsentative of the Christian rightist "Moral Majority."

Middle East experts and government officials in the US all agree that, despite Moynihan's support, alongside 27 other US senators, this bill will certainly not pass and that the US embassy will stay where it is in Tel Aviv for some time to come. It is, however, significant to witness what members of congress will not do to please Israel and its friends.

# OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

## Recognising the Politics of West Bank Development

by Chris Smith

When money is placed in the collection box of an international charity, the donor normally believes that the gift will help to feed the starving children, educate illiterate peasants, build health clinics, or contribute in a similar way to some kind of humanitarian project. A more thoughtful donor might hope that the charity will help to encourage 'development' in the sense of evolving a society with a reduced amount of suffering or an increased quality of life for its citizens. If an international charity chose to collect money in order to supply a guerrilla movement with guns, however, it would quickly find itself in trouble even though the same humanitarian principles might motivate the armed struggle. If the charity published its intentions it would probably receive few funds. Many potential donors would feel that it was not the business of humanitarian organisations to engage in political battles when they should be concentrating on the alleviation of human suffering.

The idea that it is possible to distinguish between humanitarian and political activities is widely held in overseas development circles. Precisely where a particular organisation chooses to draw the line will condition the grounds upon which project proposals will be accepted or rejected. In recent years, however, the concept of purely humanitarian 'non-political' development has been criticised on the grounds that real development must attend to questions concerning the social and political structures within a community which produce suffering. It is argued that without such analysis assistance may be purely cosmetic, doing nothing to change the root causes of the suffering.

The argument against the possibility of 'non-political' development work can be illustrated by the situation of the West Bank Palestinians. While many of their problems are by no means unique, their plight is particularly attributable to national and international political events. Moreover, a long-term solution to their problems can only be found through developments on the international stage. Nevertheless many charitable organisations working with Palestinians are very careful to ensure that their money goes only to 'non-political' projects. In practice this means that for a Palestinian to obtain funding from such organisations he or she must disavow any link or perhaps even any sympathy with the PLO. The irony is that although most Palestinians see in the PLO their only hope of long-term 'development,' they must keep this opinion to themselves if they are to obtain support from so-called development agencies.

But what exactly constitutes a non-political project? The answer would seem to depend on one's political perspective! Education, for example, is normally a basic component of any national development plan. Education aims to impart knowledge and skills which will subsequently be of benefit to society. And yet the official Israeli view of educational institutions on the West Bank is that they function primarily as centres of political radicalism. The less official view is probably that the institutions of higher education are creating a new cadre of potential leaders for the West Bank Palestinians. For whichever reason, there can be no doubt that the main obstacle to effective secondary and further education on the West Bank is their disruption by the Israeli military authorities. Schools and colleges are repeatedly opened and closed by the military government, while the students are constantly under threat of arrest or detention for interrogation. This discontinuity precludes a gradual, sustained teaching programme. Sporadic classes are conducted in an atmosphere where neither teacher nor pupil can concentrate fully on their subject because they can never be sure whether the class will be completed without some new disruption.

To these students and teachers the idea of the 'non-political' development of education is absurd. The day to day instability of the area is such that their future is determined by decisions made by the Israeli civilian and military authorities. Support for the schools and universities implies opposition to the policies of the military government and is consequently a directly political act. Choosing not to support these educational institutions as part of a 'non-political' policy would, on the other hand, endorse the *status quo* — an equally political decision in the sense that the military's disruption of the education process reflects an Israeli political objective.

'Non-political' development programmes often encourage agricultural projects which are seen as being of benefit to a particular community. Can such programmes be initiated in the West Bank without 'dirtying one's hands' with political issues? The answer would seem to be: only if you take an extremely shortsighted view. Since the occupation began in 1967 a variety of forces have shaped the productivity of Palestinian farmers: the confiscation of land for Israel, the dumping of surplus Israeli produce on the West Bank market, and the migration of farmers into wage labour both in Israel and overseas. Farmers will not invest much money or work improving their land if they believe it will be confiscated: they will not bother to grow food unless they can sell it at a reasonable price. If a farmer cannot support his family by working on the land then he will look for work elsewhere.

These basic social and economic realities form the context within which agricultural development must be viewed. The same realities have a bearing on both Israeli and Palestinian aspirations in the area. For the Palestinians the development of a healthy agriculture is seen as contributing to the infrastructure of their hoped-for state: by creating renumerative employment to discourage emigration from the area, and maintaining some degree of cultural autonomy by retaining a distinctly Palestinian peasant lifestyle. From the Israeli point of view the decline of the West Bank's agriculture encourages the weakening of the Palestinian ties with the land, encourages emigration and releases workers who are prepared to work for rock bottom wages in the Israeli economy.

Thus as with education, agricultural development (or the lack of it) in the West Bank has a variety of political repercussions. Development workers find themselves confronted by political obstacles. For example, the intensification of West Bank agriculture would normally involve an increase in the area of irrigated land, but the military authorities have forbidden the drilling of new wells. Only a change in settlement policy can create security of Palestinian land tenure; only greater marketing freedom for West Bank farmers can ensure a reasonable price for their produce. Under such circumstances attempts to develop Palestinian agriculture are necessarily political acts which resist the changes that Israel is trying to impose on the West Bank farmers.

While many might agree that the repercussions of development programmes are political they would still insist that development aid should not support overtly political groups. The difficulty with this can be illustrated by Israel's attempts to establish 'Village Leagues' on the West Bank, ostensibly non-political development organisations receiving funds from Israel. These organisations have been unanimously condemned and rejected by every West Bank organisation, basically because they are backed by Israel and do not recognise the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Thus the establishment of a non-political development agency was interpreted as a highly political act: the vast majority of Palestinians assign a far greater importance to their own political future as a nation than to short-term improvements in their lifestyle or income.

For the Palestinians real development can come only with a state of their own. Development agencies who do not recognise this fact of Middle East life will achieve little more than the administering of ineffective local anaesthetics, while failing to contribute to any real healing of the problems facing the area.

*from Middle East International*

## A Call to End Oppression

To the Editor;

The reason I am writing you this letter: there is so much slavery around the world today.

Would it be in the best interest for world peace that your government propose to the security council of the United Nations to propose to the General Assembly to amend the Charter of the United Nations, either under purposes or priniciples so that the charter would read as follows:

That any nation (member or non-member) of the United Nations that has put into slavery any human being is in violation of their inheritable rights of choice (personal choice).

That no being regardless of their origin (of nature of inherent decree) be forced to perform any act for any being "of same flesh or opposite flesh" that has an air of slavery in the origins of the nature of that merciless condition of servitude.

That any group that violates and denies any person or persons of their personal inherent rights of choice and any group that forces any group into slavery:

That group is a threat to mankind.

Joely Harverly
USA

Editor's note:

*Palestinians — the people we belong to — have been struggling for over three generations for their basic human and national rights. As soon as we achieve those and we have a government of our own, we would then be in a position to call for and support your request, with which we fully identify and agree.*

## Eitan's Military Career

To the Editor;

While reading different issues of the *Jerusalem Post* daily as these appeared within the last fortnight or so, it came to my attention that the former Chief of Staff, General Rafael Eitan, proposed that:

a) The Israeli army stays in Lebanon forever;

b) Israeli criminal prisoners be drafted into the said army and;

c) Arab students at the Naqab University leave both that institution and the country which, according to his opinion, is not theirs.

As things are I see no reason why the first two of the General's wishes should not be fulfilled, and hence propose, in my turn, that:

a) A Criminal Division of the Israeli Army should be raised out of both present and past criminal convicts, members of both the Kach and the Gush Emunim Movements, the Birkat Avraham "penitents," homosexuals, beggars, drunks, and public idiots;

b) General Eitan be appointed the C.O. of the above division;

c) The said division, including its commander, be sent to and stay in Lebanon forever, ie even in such case that the rest of the army should withdraw, the remnants of the division, if any, being then handed over to whatever Lebanese authorities happen to be in power.

Hoping to have done my best to satisfy the general, I remain sir

yours truly
Marcel Roubucek

What makes the Israeli economy tick? Only the steady flow of US-donated dollars was the explanation **Dvora Yashar** came up with when she analysed the Jewish state's current financial predicament for *Al Fajr*.

# Israeli Economy: **America's Insatiable Stepchild**

It's official now: the Israeli economy is out of control and workers — both Israeli Jews and Palestinians — will bear the brunt of attempts to revive it. *The Jerusalem Post* reported on January 4 that the government collected 24 percent less tax revenue in real terms this December than one year ago. Inflation for the past four months reached 79 percent; if it continues at this pace the inflation rate for this year will be an astronomical 473 percent, reported *The Jerusalem Post* February 16. Against this background of economic disaster, Finance Minister Yigal Cohen-Orgad, in presenting the fiscal 1984 budget to the Knesset, announced that the government was unable to predict the level of inflation and therefore reserved the right to update the budget quarterly.

In a report last July, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) dropped Israel's economic rating to the same level as several Latin American countries that have been in virtual bankruptcy for over 18 months, reported *HaAretz* February 17.

The IMF's biggest concerns are balance of payments deficits — Israel's is the highest in the world — and large debt burdens; Israel's budget makes clear how both have grown out of control.

According to *The Jerusalem Post* February 23, over 40 percent of the budget is earmarked for debt repayments (excluding sums the treasury must repay the Bank of Israel that will immediately by channeled back to the treasury). As usual, the only way that Israel will be able to sustain the rapidly deteriorating illusion that it has a viable, autonomous economy is by printing money round the clock, backed by the usual fix of funds from the United States. These measures will then accelerate the debt-inflation spirals.

Israel operates with a budget deficit that would be unthinkable elsewhere. In a normal budget, revenue at least approximates the level of government spending. But the rules are different in the fairy tale land of the Israeli economy, where tax revenue covers only 37 percent of government expenditure, according to a *Jerusalem Post* report. What makes the fairy tale work? The United States picks up the tab for the budget deficit, a fact not noted in the *Jerusalem Post's* story.

However, Israel cannot depend totally on the largesse of Uncle Sam. Money that Israel cannot get from the United States and Zionist organisations alone must be borrowed elsewhere.

A large amount has been raised inside Israel, and IS1400 billion of it must be repaid in fiscal year 1984. Over half of this money was borrowed from institutional bodies like personal funds that by law must immediately lend the money right back into the Treasury; the government faces the difficult task of convincing inflation-battered individual holders of the other half of this debt to renew their loans, rather than spend the money on consumption goods. The public is not likely to respond to patriotic exhortations, so various saving plans are being devised to 'mop up' these funds. However, no one is optimistic about the prognosis of these schemes.

There is no way that the numbers are going to add up — even in Israel. So as everyone openly acknowledges, the government will have to turn to the printing presses once more to print shekels that have no real economic backing and no value except, in billowing numbers, for exchange inside Israel. Therefore, even without taking into account the many other factors in the Israeli economy that fuel inflation (like the level of unproductive expenditures on the military and the state bureaucracy) it is obvious that last year's 190.7 percent inflation rate will soon represent the 'good old days.'

Nor will Israel be able to avoid the consquences of its debt burden forever. As Brazil, Argentina and Mexico, among others, have discovered, the price of rolling over debt indefinitely can become unbearable. The amount of borrowed money grows and interest payments multiply. Additionally, once a borrower is in a bad financial condition, higher returns must be paid to lenders to induce them to give their money to a risky business prospect. Israel, in other words, will have to pay higher and higher interest rates for the money it wants to borrow outside the US.

Of course there is a big difference between the debt burdens of Latin America and Israel. The vast bulk of Latin American debt is high-interest loans from private banks, whereas Israel gets most of its money in outright grants or loans at below market, or 'soft' rates. For example, a record aid package of US$2.25 billion, US$850 million of which is for economic and US$1.46 billion for military aid, of the total US foreign aid budget of US$15.2 billion will go to Israel in fiscal year 1985. And, for the first time, all the money will be given in outright grants. However, not all of Israel's debt is on such easy terms and its economic effect is increasingly shaping Israeli policy decisions.

Debt financing and military expenditures are a structural part of the Israeli economy. The two take up the vast bulk of even the proposed budget and leave little room for social expenditures which, small as they are, are the main area slated for cutbacks.

IS48 billion will be cut from an earlier proposed civilian ministries budget for fiscal 1984, but only IS12 billion will be cut from the vastly larger military ministries' budget, reported *The Jerusalem Post* January 12. In priorities, then, Israel is no different than the Latin American dictatorships to whom it provides military hardware and expertise — nor from its own benefactor, the United States.

So how does Israel propose to get out of this mess? Cohen-Orgad announced that in classic IMF fashion, Israel is putting the campaign to increase exports and foreign exchange earnings at the forefront of its agenda. This is the impetus behind, for example, the proposed free trade zone in Israel with the United States. If this agreement is concluded, it will be the first time that the United States has entered into a totally free trade arrangement with any one country.

In a related development, Israel just concluded an agreement with its most important trading partner (along with its captive 'partners,' the West Bank and Gaza) — the European Economic Community (EEC). This agreement, said *The Jerusalem Post* February 22, will ward off some of the effects of Spain and Portugal's entry into the EEC, giving them more favourable trading terms with its members than to outsiders like Israel. Spain, an important competitor with Israel in the European market, could have struck a mortal blow to Israeli exports without the Israeli—EEC agreement.

The government also wants to sell off as many of the state-owned companies that form the backbone of the Labour Zionist establishment as possible and move away from intervention in the local capital markets. However, as the Israeli Hebrew daily *HaAretz* pointed out February 17, Israel's precarious financial condition is unacceptable according to normal international standards and in a free market Israel would be cut off from international bank funds. *The Jerusalem Post* reported January 25 that the Bank of Israel had just prevented a major financial crash in Israel by buying US$18 million worth of government-issued bonds. Clearly the government must intervene heavily to keep the financial system afloat no matter what branch of Zionism the government adheres to.

And the financial corruption that brought scandal to the Labour Party in 1974 is in the headlines once again in Israel. The Histradrut-owned Bank Hapoalim's director Ya'acov Levinson committed suicide last week rather than face the spotlight of a widening investigation into the bank's shady financial dealings.

Under pressure from the United States and in line with the international private bourgeois orientation of the Likud, Israel is moving closer towards the policies being followed in most of the capitalist, third world countries in crisis: induce or deepen recession; slash subsidies and imports, and increase exports. Thanks to the United States' pocketbook, Israel had been free from this pressure until now. But the economic crisis has upset, though not yet overthrown, the basic rules of the game that exempted Israel from international market discipline.

But, as it will be argued in future articles, these policies are doomed to failure here as they have been elsewhere. The economic situation in Israel has nowhere to go but downhill. The extent to which the United States will be willing and able to prevent Israel from stepping over the financial brink remains to be seen.

**Book Review** by Daoud Kuttab

*The Christian Arabs* (Arabic), ed. by Elias Khoury, (*Dar al-Fan wal-Adab*. Beirut, 1982).

# Christian Arabs - Their Share in Arab Destiny

The Western media has long falsely characterised the civil war in Lebanon as a Christian-Muslim battle, rationalising separatism as the only solution.

But in the midst of Lebanon's war, a new book about perhaps the most misrepresented group of people, the Christian Arabs, helps to dispel myths about the religious, sectarian lines to the conflict. *Christian Arabs*, released by the Beirut-based Arab Research Centre, is a valuable academic study and serious discussion of what to most Westerners is a contradiction of terms. The book is a collection of lectures given by six Christian and Muslim Lebanese, all prestigious academicians, in spring 1981. The lecture series was sponsored in Beirut by *Dar al-Fan wal-Adab* (Art and Literature Center) and the discussions that followed each lecture, excerpted at the end of each chapter, give texture to the formal addresses.

Editor Elias Khoury says in the introduction of the book that Arab Christianity is an integral part of the Arab and Islamic cultural and social reality and thus cannot be separated from its origin without losing its identity and character.

The six lectures deal with Christianity in the East before Islam, during Islam, Arab Christians and the West, Arab Christians and the Future and comparisons between Christian and Islamic theologies which reiterate the Arab nature of Christians in the East.

The history of Christians in the East before Islam, a lecture given by Lebanese lawyer and historian Edmond Rabbat, gives readers a picture of the early Christian divisions. The massacres of Christians that took place in Syria and Egypt at the hands of the Byzantine Church prepared the way for the Islamic triumphs which were welcomed by the suffering Arab Christians.

Dr. Radwan Sayyed, Lebanese University professor and editor of *al-Fikr al-Arabi* (The Arab Thought) magazine, describes how Christians were treated by the conquering Arab Muslims. He explains that Arab Christians considered the Islamic *futuhat* (conquests) a liberation rather than occupation. Dr. Sayyed explains the Islamic concept of *ahl al-kitab* (the people of the book, meaning Christians and Jews) which exempts them from military service and grants them protection, freedom of movement, housing, work and worship in return for paying the *jiziyeh* tax.

Professor of modern arab history Wajih Kutheri lectured on Christianity, from religious communes to the modern state. He deals with the Arab Christian community in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Kutheri's thesis is that Western influence and its push towards the Turkish-controlled area caused sectarian friction, such as the bloody events of 1860 between Druze and Christians in the Lebanon mountains and in Mideast cities. Kutheri quotes Khalil Jibran to explain Western influence:

*"Each colony pulls for a Western country and praises its virtues. The youths who studied at American schools became American patriots and those who studied at a Jesuit institute became French ambassadors."*

Jerusalem's Greek Orthodox Patriarch, like the entire hierarchy, is a Greek national, while the faithful are Palestinian Arabs: "Arab Christianity is an integral part of the Arab and Islamic cultural and social reality and thus cannot be separated from its origin without losing its identity and character."

The relationship between Arab Christians and the West play a major role in the shaping of behaviour and overall attitudes. Lebanese Greek Orthodox Bishop George Khadr details the effects of Crusader wars and Western missions in the Middle East and stresses that the oriental Christian church differs from the West not only on a theological basis but on political and cultural bases as well. While favourably noting the liberation theology that has developed in Catholic churches in Latin America, Khadr notes that "here, until today, the Crusader image is still connected with Catholics."

Bishop Khadr does not leave his own church uncriticised. He blasts the continued foreign rule of the Greek Orthodox church (church hierarchy are Greek nationals) which, he insists, encourages Arab Christians to join the Greek Catholic or Anglican churches which have Arab nationals as church leaders. His major criticism, however, is reserved for small Protestant church missions operating in the east which he says have direct ties with intelligence departments of their countries.

American University of Beirut history professor and scholar Constantine Zureik, who is also board chairperson of the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut, refuses to discuss Arab Christians and their future except within the context of the destiny of all Arabs. Zureik's pivotal question is where the whole Arab society will stand in the inevitable struggle; will it be on the side of liberation and progress or of backwardness and domination?

Tarif Khalidi, also a professor of history at AUB and author on Islamic historiography, compares Christian and Islamic theologies in three areas: the Arab Christ, historic Islamic views of Christian theology and modern Christian and Islamic theology. Khalidi's lecture is replete with examples from the New Testament, the Quran and early Islamic writings showing the closeness and common understanding between the two monotheistic religions regarding Jesus Christ.

*Christian Arabs* is an interesting academic work and an important subject for members of Arab Christian and Muslim communities to study. Next to the very academic nature of the lectures, the discussions recorded after each chapter gave colour and practical importance. Hopefully the publishers will translate this book into English and market it in Western academic and popular circles, where ignorance is greatest.

**Book Review** by Amos Elon

*The War to Misguide* (Hebrew), by Ze'ev Shiff and Ehud Ya'ari, (Schocken Publishers, Jerusalem & Tel Aviv, 515 pp., about US$15).

# A War to Misguide - Ariel Sharon's 1982 Coup d'Etat

The war in Lebanon will enter history as the most severe political and military failure of Israel in its 36 years of existence. The war had three goals: to expel the PLO and Syria from Lebanon and to bring the Christian Phalangists to rule. All three goals failed. The human price paid for this failure has been terrible. "There is no comfort in this vain war except in reviewing honestly and cold-bloodedly the circumstances of its outbreak," write Ze'ev Shiff and Ehud Ya'ari, two well-known commentators, in their recently published book (Schoken Publishers, Jerusalem & Tel Aviv, 515 pp., Hebrew, about US$15). In this important and alarming book, they offer a wealth of information about these events, based on secret protocols and interviews in Israel, Lebanon and the US. The conclusions they make are specifically depressing.

Defence Minister Moshe Arens complained this week that this nosiness into the protocols that preceded the war contains something "almost morbid" in it. Shiff and Ya'ari maintain a different view, in my opinion justifiably so. In their book they describe and analyse the central personalities who drew this nation into a hopeless hunt for an aim of fantasy: headed by Begin, Sharon, Eitan and Shamir, but also including the then Israeli ambassador to Washington, Moshe Arens, who "adopted Sharon's primary concepts about Lebanon and the solution to its problems" and who was the first Israeli ambassador in Washington who didn't serve as a channel to moderate American advice. This leading quintet acted within the system of ideological collectiveness, write Shiff and Ya'ari. Its members "had fed each other with similar arguments while sealing their ears to the advice of most — if not all — the experts who served under them. . . the war became a certainty from the moment that these five personalities joined together at the ruling top." One who did notice this well was Phalangist leader Bashir Gemayel, who told an Israeli army officer at the beginning of 1982, that such men ruling Israel created "an ideal situation" for the Phalangists who could use Israel's interference in the Lebanese civil war to help the Maronites (with 20 percent of the population) to dominate. In return for this, they were prepared to expel the Palestinians and to ensure that Lebanon would sign a peace treaty with Israel.

The Rabin government and the first Begin government rejected these offers. Rabin was prepared to help the Phalangists only with arms and training. Dayan and Weitzman, in the first Begin government, preferred to strive for peace with the Muslim majority in the Middle East through Egypt by a complex involvement in the murderous internal struggles of Israel's unstable northern neighbour. Ze'ev Shiff and Ehud Ya'ari describe in their book the great change that took place with the appointment of Arik Sharon as Defense Minister in the second Begin government. Well-informed people in military intelligence and in the Mossad continued to warn of the complexity involved with those whom they considered at the best corrupt adventurers and at the worst — cynics who would only manoeuvre us to their aims and betray us at the first occasion. Begin and Sharon didn't want to listen to these warnings. Sharon — "well-talented as a tactician " but in matters of strategies "a naive romantic" — wanted to hit the Syrians. He wished to establish "a new order" in the Middle East that, thanks to its anti-Soviet standpoint, would enjoy US support. Begin — who apparently was already sick on the day the war broke out — dreamt about a second peace treaty. "He enjoyed his power to influence the process of events in a neighbouring country. Begin had a sweet thought: that he bears the burden of responsibil' of honour for the fate of anothe. people."

Palestinian women beside themselves with grief after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, 1982. Sharon's war knew no bounds.

However, the governmental cabinet to which Begin and Sharon brought the great "pines plan" — the framework of which all these dreams were supposed to be realised — did not want to approve it. Shiff and Ya'ari ask how the war in Lebanon, during which we engaged the Syrians and conquered Beirut, nevertheless broke out. How did it happen that Arik Sharon could, with the support of Begin, pilot the war based on an approach (vis-a-vis Syria and Beirut) that the government explicitly disapproved of at the time and "in spite of the intelligence community heads' warnings against it and in spite of objections in the military eschelons"? How did this happen? This happened, claim Shiff and Ya'ari, because Sharon lied to the government (and maybe also to Begin) and hid essential information. He could do this because senior Israeli army officers, who held the information and didn't hesitate to express their views against the war plan of Sharon in general staff meetings, chose to be silent when they were called to participate in the government meetings. "Some of them feared Sharon, some got a clear view of his aims only late, others looked for the personal advance and prestige that accompanies every military victory."

The military intelligence head voiced serious warnings — but not into the ears of the ministers. The head of the Mossad didn't believe in the war's success but not all the government ministers knew this, claim Shiff and Ya'ari. The prime minister used to silence the few ministers — one of them Mordechai Zipori — who tried to press Sharon for explanations and to warn against the significance of Sharon's proposals. And they themselves, instead of struggling for their views or resigning or publicly protesting against what they considered, on the eve of the war in Lebanon, as approaching disaster — bowed their heads in front of the power of the prime minister and the defence minister. They voted for the war (Zipori) or abstained (Ehrlich and Berman). Not in vain did Dante specify the hottest of hell's quarters to those "sitting on the fence."

Sharon, claim Shiff and Ya'ari, used to put before the ministers final facts. Begin used to confirm Sharon's decisions (retroactively?) and the government was silent. So it was from the beginning. The original decision of the government, on June 5, 1982, approved only a limited military campaign, short (Sharon spoke of 48 hours), for the removal of the PLO artillary from the Israeli settlements to a distance of 40 kilometres. "We will not attack the Syrians," Begin said to the ministers who feared such a possibility. Sharon explained that "Beirut is beyond the picture... (we) should keep away from there." Shiff and Ya'ari claim that in spite of these promises, the order to the military forces given on the morrow, "indeed spoke of an alert to join the Christians (in Beirut) and to annihilate the Syrian army in Lebanon."

Two days later, on June 8, exactly when Begin was speaking in the Knesset, stating that "we don't want any engagement with the Syrian army," the soldiers and officers in the front knew that his words "didn't fit what was understood in the field... at noon that day one of the armoured brigades of the Israeli army attacked the Syrian position around Jezzin." In the front command, Sharon made a rehearsal with one of the commanders of the air force on how to "perform" in the government the proposal to annihilate the Syrian rocket position in the Lebanese Beqa'a.

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Retrospectively, it seems that the Kahan Committee acted too early. What is being discovered now dwarfs what was known so far about the "failures" and "exceptions" that enabled the Sabra and Shatila massacres to take place. The blood of hundreds of men cries out from the earth. They fell in vain. If the accusations of Shiff and Ya'ari are right — Sharon should be brought to criminal court. By hiding essential information from the government, Sharon denied the government the right to decide. This does not release the ministers from their responsibility for what happened. There is the strong impression that they wanted to be raped (sic). Some of them apparently leaked to the authors part of the secret material that is published in this book — and this certainly helps them now to feel like pure souls. However, they are responsible — and guilty — like all of them. Sharon circumvented democracy, but the 'democrats' permitted him to do so, and sometimes with joyful applause.

On the eve of the war, claim Shiff and Ya'ari, a sharp change occurred in the ruling order in the country which facilitated the glide into the war that most of the ministers were not interested in from the beginning. Their appetite increased with the eating (vomitting, afterwards). Sharon created a kind of *coup d'etat* that transferred the power of decision-making from the government to him, without seemingly hurting the democratic institutions. This is an idea that was expressed before them by Knesset member Yossi Sarid. The democratic institutions continued to act, to debate and discuss; the government continued to convene. Indeed it became — without any serious objection — a rubber stamp and granted gradual affirmation to what it refused to affirm beforehand as one whole issue. The main opposition aided it. The Labour Party heads now claim that facts were denied to them. However, whatever they did know in June 1982 about the plans of Ariel Sharon must have been sufficient for them to object to the adventure. Nevertheless, they were quiet because of cheap opportunism and a fear of loosing the sympathy of public opinion. "Begin understood," write Shiff and Ya'ari, "that he need not expect trouble from the main opposition about the campaign that he planned in Lebanon." Like Mordechai Zipori, who in spite of his doubts, finally voted in the government for the war — so most of the Alignment members voted for the war in the Knesset. If indeed there was a *coup d'etat* — the Alignment also facilitated it. (HaAretz, February 17, 1984)

Israelis on patrol in Beirut. Sharon's lies worked: by hiding essential information, "Sharon denied the government the right to decide." Yet even now the backlash continues to grow.

Too few Israelis realised too late exactly what Sharon and his like were up to. Horrified, they began to join forces in the biggest anti-war movement Israel has even known, shattering once and for all the myth of 'national consensus.'

According to Israeli military regulations, confirmed by their High Court, value added tax is payable by businesses in the occupied territories. When the High Court confirmed the order last year even the Israeli press described its decision as a 'unique' interpretation of international law. Also unique, Zvi Bar'el of *HaAretz* found, is the way tax men administer the new code — arbitrary registration procedures.

# VAT'S Network of Catch-22s

"Believe me, I don't know what they want me to do anymore. I went to the VAT (value added tax) bureau and wanted to register as a licensed businessman. They told me: 'We won't register you.' I asked: 'Why not?' They said: 'Because you don't keep accounting books. First you manage your bookkeeping, then we'll see.' I said: 'But I want to start bookkeeping, to pay you for my income and deduct my expenses.' They told me: 'No. First you manage your bookkeeping, then we'll decide whether we'll recognise your expenses.' In the meantime they ordered me to pay IS20,000 every month for VAT. I told them: 'But I also have expenses for tyres, oil, gasoline. I deserve deductions.' They said: 'We don't recognise this.' I said: 'These are receipts from Israel.' They said: 'No, this is our law'."

This is one of the strange practices in the West Bank today. Indeed, the VAT director in the West Bank defines the law there as the law in use in Israel, but what seem small differences constitute the whole difference. For instance, a factory owner or any other businessman cannot register as a licensed business and be awarded legal returns unless he has proven during a certain period of time — between three to six months — that he had maintained bookkeeping as requested by law to satisfy the tax collector in his region. After that period if he is due a tax refund its real value will be half the sum he would have received at the proper time.

In the '(civil) administration' they have an explanation for that: the Arab inhabitants don't want to maintain bookkeeping as legally requested, only to gain the returns. As proof, the administration people say that most of the requests to register as a business come when there is a large expense that warrants a tax refund. In Israel, of course, this process is not customary and, even when the expense is very big, the VAT authorities cannot refuse to register an authorised business.

The happy ones who have already received, after some effort, the status of an authorised business face a new type of problem: as long as they are entitled to tax refunds of less than IS50,000, they can deduct the sum due them from the sum to be payed. However, what happens when the sum is higher? In Israel, the authorised business will get the whole sum at once but on the West Bank, the deduction system proceeds along two or three payments — by half the year the value of the return is reduced by at least 50 percent. To this they respond in the administration, "When there is a large refund request, we conduct an examination. Because of limited staff the examination takes a long time and the business suffers." It should be mentioned that the scope of these examinations is endlessly wider than what takes place for similar cases in Israel. By the way, these methods which are applied to the Arab residents of the West Bank are not applied to the Jewish residents who are treated exactly as it is followed in Israel.

An even stranger matter regarding VAT collection on the West Bank relates to the owners of lorries, buses, taxies and other commercial vehicles. They cannot register as authorised businesses, even if they maintain excellent bookkeeping. They are subjected to a fixed schedule. The VAT estimate is assessed according to a table based on the vehicle's year of manufacture, its size and its use. The estimate is fixed and is not influenced — contrary to the law — by the expenses or income of the vehicle owner. So it happens that the owner of a commercial vehicle cannot deduct the expenses for replacing an engine that has stopped working; likewise for the tyres, oil, fuel and other expenses. However, these may be considered as relatively small expenses. The real expense comes at the moment property is renewed. In Israel, for instance, when the owner of an old taxi needs to exchange his vehicle, he is of course entitled to deduct the VAT that he paid for the new vehicle from the VAT that is in turn demanded from him. In the West Bank — No! In the administration they tell me that the tax schedule that is put upon the vehicle owner takes into account rising expenses. However, it is understood from the accounts of the lorry owners that if they would be recognised as regular authorised businesses the government would lose a lot of money. On the other hand, in the fixed schedule which, I repeat, is not legal — the government does not pay returns at all.

The matter of 'fixing' the owners of commercial vehicles has implications in many other areas. Since they are not authorised businesses, they are not entitled to issue recognised tax accounts to their clients. So it goes that factory owners who use the services of many lorries, and even grocery store owners who need the services of vans, don't receive receipts and cannot prove expenses for the sake of VAT. This is another way in which the state gains from the disorder. Some drivers with whom I talked went even further: "The state does this deliberately so that factory owners hire Israeli lorries whose owners may issue legal bills. It's not worth it for them to hire us because our bills aren't legal and they lose the returns."

This is also the charge by owners of taxis, vans and buses that Israeli clients do not hire them because "our receipts are not worth anything." Till a few months ago this was the situation also in the butcheries, bakeries and driving schools; they were not permitted to issue receipts and were not granted registration as authorised businesses.

The 'civil administration' admits that indeed this is the situation and it is possible that it could change in future. Concerning expenses for income tax (distinguished from VAT), they explain that "the vehicle owner may give a receipt to his client that indeed is not recognised for VAT but the client may use it for income tax accounting." However, the reality is that drivers and vehicle owners don't carry simple receipts with them. So an absurd situaton is created.

Let's imagine for a moment a Bethlehem shopkeeper who hired a van from the West Bank in order to bring merchandise from Jerusalem. The driver got his pay and the shopkeeper didn't receive a receipt but inscribed the expense in his books. When the income tax authorities come to check his books, they will see that the expnse has no receipt as proof. They will be entitled to claim that the merchant put the money in his pocket and will ask him to pay tax on the expense. This situation is possible — but it is rare because, the same shopkeeper, since he cannot get a legal receipt from the driver, will pay the driver from his "black" money, will not register the expense in his books and so will increase his profits.

Israeli commercial vehicle owners residing on the West Bank (settlers) register as regular authorised businesses according to the Israeli law and are, of course, entitled to issue legal receipts.

So it happens that an Israeli law that is intended to be introduced in the West Bank is distorted and wrinkled in order to fit not only the financial needs of the state but also the policy that defines unequal conditions to competing sectors from both sides of the 'green line.' It may be said that the Arabs — at least in specific sectors — pay less taxes than their Israeli colleagues and therefore it is 'fair' to impose on them certain restrictions. However, there is no ground for the hypocrisy that says the law is equal for all. (Translation; Ha-Aretz, February 17, 1984).

**"The state does this deliberately so that factory owners hire Israeli lorries whose owners may issue legal bills. It's not worth it for them to hire us because our bills aren't legal and they lose the returns"**

**Kanafe salesmen to taxi drivers are all hit by the VAT catch-22: This was the situation also in the butcheries, bakeries and driving schools; they were not permitted to issue receipts and were not granted registration as authorised businesses."**

# The Land After I Had Gone

by Samih al-Qassem

*A day after my green youth*
*was engraved on marble tomb*
*my heart said — excuse me,*
*marble tomb*
*will a stronger knight be*
*victorious*
*after I have gone?*
*If he becomes the 'lover'*
*I am a memory*
*then completely forgotten.*

•••

*My land which, with my*
*ancestors' bones,*
*I ploughed*
*It intermingled with my sons*
*my land, to which I showed my*
*love*
*and cared for its fruit all my life*
*my land which...*
*Is he the lover,*
*I am a memory*
*and then completely forgotten*

•••

*Oh, our everlasting home*
*oh, our temple-home*
*upon its doorsteps I kneel*
*and smell the perfume of the*
*shoes of its builder*
*oh, the door to my home*
*opened to houses all over the*
*world*
*oh my attic*
*the cradle of the first word I*
*sang*
*you are witnesses to my*
*affection*
*you, when his hands grab its*
*fruit*
*you, my sole shelter*
*Is he the beloved*
*am I a memory*
*then completely forgotten*

•••

*who put boulders on plains?*
*who watched the star?*
*who taught the breeze to blow*
*softly on gardens?*
*who... but only the good*
*generous heart of my*
*grandfather*

•••

*who made the fields bountiful?*
*who but my old uncle and father*
*who watched for nests in our*
*ancient olive trees?,*
*who engraved names of relatives,*
*one after another,*
*on each branch of all our vines,*
*only this blessed lover?*

•••

*Is he the lover*
*Am I a memory*
*and completely forgotten?*
*Oh the most beautiful beats of*
*my heart*
*oh with which I enjoyed love*
*Am I made wretched through*
*hatred?*
*Answer your son,*
*your misfortunate son*
*oh land?*

# Finally Almonds Blossom

by Emil Habibi

...until the approach of that day at the end of February when I, with my wife and son, returned from a visit to a friend in the Old City of Jerusalem. It was noon when we began descending the windy Luban road. Almond branches were blossoming. Their white and pink petals intermingled in spring's enchantment. All the ten mountains danced jubilantly.

"In what languages did you write this verse?"

"In languages of my eyes and heart. You would listen to me till the end."

My wife kept pressing me to park the car and pick almond branches from old trees which I believe were there in my youth. We parked the car and pulled down four branches which smiled on our faces and our faces smiled on them.

When my wife asked me, "If an almond branch is planted will it grow?" my heart saddened and I began remembering.

"Do you remember when we were young, we had a friend who loved a woman from Jerusalem or Bethlehem. From there, we loved his love."

"Everyone loved and we loved his love."

"But our friend's love was more beautiful than ours. I had a story. We were on a trip and stopped by that almond tree in the Luban hills. There was a house. The house held chickens and cows. It is still there, but I don't see chickens or cows. We asked the house owners for water. Around the house there were girls visiting, among them the girlfriend of our friend."

"What next?"

"I remember a nice story. I don't know how it came to me. His girlfriend cut two branches and gave one to him and kept another for herself. They swore to keep the two branches and to meet the next spring when the almonds blossomed. His family would then ask for her hand. How did this beautiful story end?"

"Why do you worry so much about them?"

"I do not know but I have a strong desire to open all pages of old friendships. As if I want to strengthen the present with the past bonds. The bonds will never be loose. The past was blossoming with hope, embracing the world and everything in it. Unblemished and open like a child's eyes. Today I want to tie myself with its bonds to save myself from this presence. Am I like a drowning man tying myself to an air supply?"

"And after that?"

"After the June war I travelled eagerly seeking old friends. Whenever I met one my eagerness increased and since I remembered the story of our friend, I looked for him. None of my friends remembered his story. My curiosity troubled me, so I asked most of my friends how they recognised his wife. Of my youthful friends no one asked but you. I came to you; do you remember him and relieve me?"

"You were always a strange man but tonight your curiosity adds to your strangeness. What's this curiosity?"

"I realise that I never confined myself within a shell. My back only bent when I cut my bonds with the past. What is the past? The past is not time; the past is you, him, her and all friends. We all make the picture of past. Everyone coloured it their particular colour. The frame and content of the picture were completed with all its parts and colours.

"Our friend with his beautiful love is the smile in this picture. What would remain of the *Mona Lisa* if her smile disappeared? His story ends with the lover reunited with her darling — a happy ending — or with a long separation — the sad end. It is an authentic expression of old springs which I hope to come after every winter."

"I see you refer to the (Tale of Two Cities) novel of two towns — the lover and his darling and the happy and sad endings. Life is not clear lines but a twisted net. Is it not the case that your imagination, aroused by spring's longing for the high mountain, made up this tale?"

"My imagination has been aroused, it is true, but I will not force it to sleep again and therefore I am looking for my friend. Do you remember him?"

"Let me try; after I remember him, I will tell you."

Mr. 'M' left me sad. I never saw him so sad in my life. I sadly remained standing still. For a few moments after he left, I had to forcibly stop myself running after him, to shake his memory alive. But am I able to give life to the dead?

How do I not remember the beautiful love story whose hero Mr. 'M' wanted to remember? How many times have I asked myself: "How could man kill such love in his heart?"

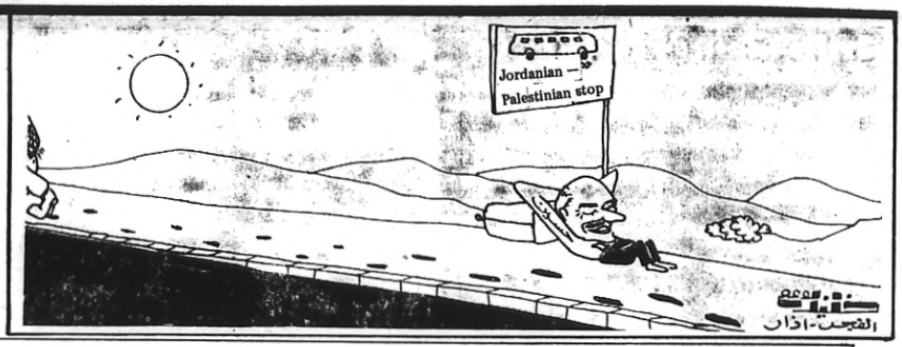
After June's war, when I visited the honourable honest lady from Jerusalem or Bethlehem, as Mr. 'M' called her, she showed me a dried almond branch which she had kept for long years. It was about to blossom again with white and pink petals when she told his story. She told me that he and some friends visited her. All the time he was talkative and very happy. She took them to see books and unique works of art. We saw the dried almond branches and asked her: "What is it?" She told him that almonds bloom in February.

Now after Mr. 'M' visited me and asked I understand everything.

I am sure that Mr. 'M' was sincere in his forgetting and sincere in his curiosity to remember. In his strange internal will he forgot that he himself is the hero of the beautiful love story, the smile which blossomed upon our youth. Is it my duty to remind and relieve him? It is my duty, true.

If he gets taller, he told me, his arms would grow too in this story. Then he will remember and restore the bonds with the past and save himself from the present. Finally the almonds blossomed, they met, the spring laughed and fate giggled.

# WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS




The Palestinian-Jordanian talks and the Lebanese civil war were the major front page topics in the local press this week.

All carried photos and stories of PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's visit to Jordan. Editorials radically varied in their assessment of the latest moves.

Al Quds daily was strongly supportive of the visit and gave front page coverage to the pro-Jordanian delegation headed by Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij and the statement they presented to King Hussein and Arafat. Al Fajr and Al Sha'ab were cautious, stressing that the talks not deviate from Palestine National Council resolutions and the Fez plan drawn up at the last Arab summit.

Al Mithaq bi-weekly strongly opposed the visit, saying that "Arafat does not represent the PLO and Jordan has nothing to give."

## The Palestinian View

The talks in Amman between Yasir Arafat and King Hussein are based on two contradictory views of many points.

The Palestinian side looks at the talks based on the decisions of the Palestine National Council at Algiers, and of the Fez summit. That is, the PLO is negotiating from the viewpoint of its sole legitimate representation of the Palestinian people. It is negotiating with an Arab country to cooperate on finding support for the PLO and the Palestinian cause in order to reach the goal of self-determination and building the independent Palestinian state.

The Jordanian views changed recently when the Jordanian parliament was recalled, contradicting the Rabat summit decisions. This was meant to change the role of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. However, this idea is losing interest now after King Hussein's talks in Washington failed.

On the other side, some voices have come out crying over the land and talking about 'saving what could be saved' and about a historical opportunity that should not be wasted, if the PLO would only make some concessions. Some made themselves guardians over the PLO and announced that Arafat has no choice but to agree to King Hussein's conditions. All these voices are trying to take advantage of the situation of the PLO following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the separatists' coup attempt, and the Syrian-Libyan aggression on the Palestinian people and forces in north Lebanon. These voices try to hit the accomplishments of this people particularly their identity and unity through the framework of the PLO. However these voices are naive and are dreaming if they believe for one moment that they can spread rumours and try to sell an imaginary American solution, or even to influence the Palestinian decision protected by the Palestinian leadership and our people.

When Abu Ammar talks in Amman, he is not talking from a weak position, as some are assuming. His talks are actually backed by powerful resources. He has the Palestinian people behind him. This people has given his organisation and leadership legitimacy. He is also talking based on the Palestinian political programme as decided by the Palestine National Council. He also talks supported by the Fez summit decisions and the Palestine conference in Geneva, as well as the growing support our cause and right for self-determination and the establishment of an independent state, have in the world. He is talking backed by the achievements of the Palestinian people over many years of dispersion, suffering, difficulties, conspiracies, bloodshed and martyrs.

Our faith in the Palestinian leadership which led the battle of our people to these achievements, is capable of imposing the Palestinian view in dialogue with all the Arab countries. These bases are capable of protecting our people's unity and journey, and to foil any attempt for trusteeship, and they can also bolster the journey until self-determination and the establishment of the Palestinian state.

AL SHA'AB
February 28

## The Expected Agreement

All reports indicate that the Palestinian-Jordanian talks are moving in the right direction for reaching a joint strategy that will be the base from which to launch their coordinated moves to solve the Palestinian issue.

Yasir Arafat's statements leave the impression that everything is fine, and that the two brotherly leaderships are about to reach an agreement acceptable to all the Arabs and supported by the Palestinians everywhere, particularly in the occupied land.

Such an agreement is a necessity to any sincere efforts to end the sufferings of the people here who see that the Arab apathy towards their cause has reached such a degree that not a single voice is heard anymore to defend their rights or back them in their difficulties.

In the absence of any real alternative, the Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue remains the only Arab and international alternative left that has a chance to succeed.

If both leaderships actually reach an agreement, the other parties concerned for finding a solution for the Palestinian cause, particularly the US and Israel, will have to face a new reality which they will not be able to ignore.

The important thing is to reach this agreement. This is the only choice the Palestinian people are putting in front of the Palestinian-Jordanian summit going on in Amman.

AL QUDS
February 29

## Gemayel's Damascus Visit

The visit yesterday by Lebanese President Amin Gemayel to Damascus is of special importance because of what the Lebanese crisis has passed, and what it is still going through, making matters more complicated and deeply ingrained.

The Lebanese President has realised, following the series of heated events in Lebanon, that the US cannot anymore, due to its failure in Lebanon, guarantee the continuation of the May 17 Lebanese-Israeli agreement signed under Washington's auspices. The sign that best indicates this failure is the pull out of the Marines to the sea.

The recent visit to Washington by an aide to the Lebanese President, during which he met some high-ranking US officials, had no encouraging results, particularly with matters dealing with US aid to Lebanon. This makes Washington less credible towards the Lebanese crisis.

On the Israeli side the confusion among the ranks of the Israeli forces in Lebanon since June 1982, caused by the Lebanese resistance, has made the Israeli position very precarious. This convinced Gemayel that even Israel will not be able to "save" its agreement with Lebanon.

Another sensitive point the Lebanese president took into consideration is that it is almost certain, in light of the above indicators, that if he does not visit Damascus, and open a new page in relation with it, factors that may partition Lebanon will persist.

As for the Phalange opposition to the visit, particularly among the military wing of the Phalange party, it will in fact not have much influence in the long run, especially since Syria, after its rapprochement with Lebanon, will give power to Lebanese national reconciliation. This, then, will save Lebanon from the civil war that is burning it.

AL FAJR
March 1

## Learning Gemayel's Lessons

Those who entrusted their cards and their nation's sovereignty to the US have forgotten what has happened to Amin Gemayel, who thought that by relying on American and Israeli aid he could challenge his people's will and sign a surrender agreement that takes away from Lebanon's sovereignty and respect and threatens Syria's security.

These thoughts vanished because of the steadfastness of the Lebanese nationalists and their allies. The correct stands of the revolutionary forces in our Arab world were also confirmed, when they refused to rely on the US imperialists and their surrender plans. They relied instead on the popular power and the backing of the Soviet Union.

The US imperialists and their allies tried to impose a horrifying submissive solution on Lebanon against the will of its national movement and Syria's security. But this was defeated and the submission agreement will soon be abrogated.

None of the US promises helped Gemayel. It became clear to him and others that the new balance of power after the victories of the Lebanese nationalists did not leave him any choice but to agree to the cancellation of this agreement.

The new reality proved how wrong the assumptions were that the *status quo* in the balance of power is as it was following the exodus from Beirut. It also proved that any anti-nationalist plan will be unsuccessful.

If the delegates to Amman, the Jordanian officials and those who are flirting with US surrender plans are trying to act as if they will be more cautious and luckier than Amin Gemayel, there are among the Arab leaders those who believed that Amin Gemayel would be luckier than his predecessors, which he wasn't. Regardless of this pretension, the shadow of Gemayel's experience is painted in front of their eyes even as they listen to Washington's 'sweetest' promises. Gemayel has listened to these promises. Even the Arab 'majority,' which King Hussein wanted to amend the Arab League covenant to isolate Syria, is changing as the balance of power changes in favour of the Arab liberation movements.

AL TALIA
March 1

## For Local Consumption Only

Even though the talks between Arafat and the Jordanian government came out with a joint statement that contained nothing new as some had expected in such a bad situation, this meeting should not be taken lightly.

This is the meeting which reconnected what was broken in April 1983, when the PLO was strong and united, and supported by our people everywhere. It came after Arafat added to his diversion by visiting the Camp David regime disregarding the PLO as a liberation movement and an obstruction to imperialist plans.

We are saying this after we are sure that Arafat, ever since the opposition movement started, has been trying to deepen the divisions in the PLO. He made this visit claiming he is doing it in the name of the Palestinian people even though the Palestine National Council specified the relationship with Jordan after the establishment of the independent state.

All this leaves us certain that the final statement was not really so, and that Jordan cannot accept such a statement.

The final statement issued after the talks is primarily for local consumption. It is not what satisfies the imperialists in the White House, or the imaginations of Cairo and Riyadh.

AL MITHAQ
March 3

# US Troops Fight on Phalangist Side

**by Livia Rokach**

The US-led, NATO multinational forces in Beirut have dissolved, admittedly proving to have been a political and military failure. But American troops continue to be engaged in a direct US military intervention in Lebanon, alongside the exclusively Phalangist military units of the disbanded Lebanese army and the militias of the fascist 'Lebanese Forces' against the Lebanese popular and patriotic resistance forces.

The American troops, consisting mainly of Green Berets and Rangers units were not part of the MNF but were shipped to Lebanon last year under a bilateral agreement between the Reagan administration and the Gemayel regime, ostensibly to train and 'advise' the regular Lebanese army. Some of these troops were, however, involved in the Lebanese civil war already last September, when they were made to intervene in Souq al-Gharb to prevent this mountain outpost from falling to the resistance forces when the Phalangist-dominated forces stationed there had practically surrendered.

Through the past week, following the withdrawal of the MNF Marines contingent from Khalde airport, Reagan administration spokespersons flooded the media with official and unofficial statements alleging, undoubtedly for domestic electoral reasons, a US 'disengagement' in Lebanon. At the same time, however, the military activities of the US troops in the Beirut area and in the Shouf mountains have been stepped up. Moreover, according to Beirut's French-language daily *L'Orient Le Jour*, the American naval bombings which continued this week are directed to support the ground operations of these troops.

A major base of the US force is located in the Maronite village of Beit Meri, on the northern periphery of east Beirut. The base also hosts — in a Catholic convent overlooking the capital and the Shouf mountains — an observation and communication post which guides the naval shellings of the Sixth Fleet. The post is massively fortified and surrounded by heavy artillery batteries pointed at Druze villages in the Shouf. The base is run by US Green Berets. American troops are also present again in Souq al-Gharb, the Shouf village situated five kilometres away from the Ba'abda presidential palace which constitutes the last outpost of the Phalangist forces in the central mountain region. The American military are flanking, in Souq al-Gharb, the exclusively Phalangist eighth brigade, in fact directing its operations and maintaining communications with the Sixth Fleet.

Officially, the American 'advisors' are 'training' the Lebanese army. In reality they are directing the shelling of civilian residential areas of west Beirut by the regular and irregular fascist forces artillery in east Beirut. Since the army's split in early February between prevalently Muslim nationalist units and Phalangist-dominated units, the blending of the latter with the 'Lebanese Forces' militias leaves no possibility of even a merely formal distinction between the two.

American 'advisors' are also 'training' Phalangist special units in what they call "long-range skills," or "missions behind the enemy lines," more realistically definable as terrorist activities. An illuminating example of this kind of activity, in which, on the other hand, the Phalangists had already for years received Israeli-sponsored training, was the terrorist attack perpetrated on Wednesday, February 29, in the densely populated Daral-Fatwa neighbourhood in west Beirut. A car-bomb exploded between two 10-storey buildings overcrowded with families of Lebanese Shi'ite refugees who had been forced away from the southern neighbourhoods in early February by the savage shellings of the US-led Lebanese army. The bomb killed an as yet unknown number of persons — three bodies were extracted from the debris, among them that of a 4-year-old child, but others remained buried — and injured over 100, many of them young children who were playing in a nearby open sapce.

The terrorist operation — the first since the liberation of west Beirut — was carried out at the same time as intense shelling of the Muslim neigbourhoods of Tal al-Khayyat, Qasqa Zauf and the "Cola" crossroad from the eastern sector. Indeed a 'long-range skill' operation, the terrorist attack was clearly meant to destabilise the security situation in west Beirut, create panic and chaos and discredit the popular forces' organisation in the city and its control thereof. Shortly afterwards, the US Sixth Fleet frigate the USS *Sims* also joined in, with a shelling which landed several 127 mm. rockets in south Beirut and the mountains beyond.

Another of the long list of lie detector tests gone wrong for the Reagan administration and its 'secret war' in Lebanon regards the arms and ammunition supplied to the Phalangist forces in east Beirut, which Washington had claimed were "suspended" following the disbanding of the Lebanese army. It has, in fact, been ascertained that such arms shipments continue, aboard Italian boats belonging to the Genoa-based Costa company, from US military bases along the Italian Mediterranean coast.

## ONCE UPON A TIME WE WERE LIKE A PIECE OF FURNITURE...

The Women's Work Committee runs a pilot English course in Abu Dis village near Jerusalem. Here two English students give their opinion of being a woman in the occupied territories today. They comment on the changes that have occurred in woman's status in the Arab world and the changes to come. The first is the mother of three young girls, and the other a secondary school student.

*Maha:*

*****

Once upon a time the woman was considered like a piece of furniture in the house. Her condition was very poor because she was working all the time in her house, on her land and buying the vegtables in the market. Then the man of the house or her husband behaved as if he owns her.

At present the woman's position is changing. She became more effective in the society. She learnt to get out of her house and into the practical life. If you go to the factories, offices, and establishments, you will see the women side by side working with men. She discusses many subjects and persuades many men by her opinion. This composition is about a woman in an Arab society, but in Western society, women have more freedom than here. They work in the space field, and occupy great positions in government.

Now we are hoping for more changes in our position in the villages, because we suffer from great oppression from the man.

*Miriam:*

*****

The position of women is going to be better than the past. There are many changes that have already happened.

In the past the women lived in bad conditions. The man considered her like a service without any meaning without any value. He took a wife to serve him and to give him babies. To cook and clean the house and to wait on him in the house and when she said, no, about wrong things, he hit her. She can't do anything without asking her husband.

Russia was the first country to give woman her freedom to share with man in building and developing an independent country followed by other countries in Europe and America.

The important factor that helped the woman to get free and have an independent personality was the revolutions, because she must share with the man to make the revolution a success, and after that to develop her country. In the beginning the demands of the women were different, than now and the demands of the women in Arab society is different from developed societies because our society and the Arab world fell down under the occupation in the past and now is still. But the most developed countries have revolutions. The woman can take her freedom after her country.

CALANDER OF EVENTS

MARCH 7 — 8:00 pm. Politically active women lecture on the International Women's Day, at MCL Club, 8, Yehuda Halevi Street, 3rd floor.

MARCH 8 — International Women's Day.

JERUSALEM — Working Womens Committee festival at Federation of Professional Unions building — Beit Hanina 3:00 pm. (Arabic)

NAZARETH — Demonstration organised by the Nazareth Democratic Women under the slogan "For a just peace and for rights and equality for women." Demonstration begins from Beit al-Sadaka at 10:30 am. (Arabic)

TEL AVIV — Demonstration from Ben Gurion Boulevard to Dizengoff Square — 4:00 pm. Committee For Womens Equality and Peace on International Women's Day. For information: 03-288001, early morning or late night.

JERUSALEM — Bible month lecture *Bible Translations* by Father Peter Madrous at YMCA, 4:00 pm. (Arabic)

MARCH 9

JERUSALEM — A special eulogy ceremony for Palestinain poet Mu'in Bseiso at Arab Women's Federation at 3:00 pm. (Arabic)

MARCH 10

NAZARETH — Meeting of Nazareth Democratic Women at Beit el Sadaka. 6:00 pm. Felicia Langer speaking.

MARCH 13

TEL AVIV — Tel Aviv branch of Committee in Solidarity with BZU, Tuesday, March 13, 6:30 pm. For location, ask member. (Hebrew)

# WEEKLY REVIEW

**February 27, 1984**

### LANGER MEETS PRISONERS

JERUSALEM — Lawyer Felicia Langer met political prisoners Ziad Abu Ain and Mohammed Abu Wa'ar at Nafha prison. Abu Wa'ar complained to Langer that he is not receiving proper treatment and his health is deteriorating. Langer said Abu Wa'ar, who has been in prison for 15 years serving a life sentence, was brought to her with his feet tied.

### TEENAGER TORTURED

JERUSALEM — Lawyer Felicia Langer appealed to the Israeli military court in Jenin to release on bail Abd al-Aziz Qabalan, 16, after he was severely beaten while at Jenin jail. The court is expected to hear the appeal today.

Reports from Fara'a jail say that several prisoners who were tortured were admitted to Rafidiya hospital for treatment.

### RESEARCH CENTRE TO CAIRO

AMMAN — Amman sources said the PLO decided to move its Palestine Research Centre to Cairo after the Egyptian government agreed. The sources also said the PLO intends to establish a cultural centre in Cairo.

The PRC, headed by Sabri Jiryis, was headquarted in Beirut until it was closed by the Lebanese government after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

### LAND CONFISCATED

JERUSALEM — An 11-dunum plot owned by Issa Mousa Abd al-Nabi, near Gilo settlement, was confiscated by the Israeli military. Abd al-Nabi had filed a complaint against the military order and showed the court proof of his possession of the land. His objection, however, was refused and Israeli bulldozers are now working on the land at Sharafat.

### PUBLIC EMPLOYEES GET PAY HIKE

TULKARM — West Bank public employees will receive a 13.9 percent pay increase in addition to IS5000 in travel allowance, beginning next month.

### YOUTHS GET 3 YEARS

NABLUS — The military court in Nablus sentenced Abd al-Fatah Habash, Immad Hindi and A'aid Abu Ghazaleh to three-and-a-half year prison terms on charges of throwing a Molotov at an Israeli military vehicle.

### TWO YOUTHS JAILED

HEBRON — The military court in Hebron sentenced student Ziad Tietie to a one-year jail term and one year suspended on security charges. Another student, Issam Abu Ajamieh, was given a five-month jail sentence and seven months suspended on similar charges. Both are from Fawwar camp, south of Hebron.

### ...AND FOUR MORE ARRESTED

TEL AVIV — Four youths from the Galilee village of Arrabeh were arrested on suspicion of sabotaging a water pipe carrying water to a nearby Israeli post. The radio said the pipe had been sabotaged several times in the past.

### FIRE DESTROYS CAR

BETHLEHEM — Fire completely destroyed a car owned by Lawrence Hanna Hanania, owner of a souvenir shop in Bethlehem. Hanania's store was set on fire two weeks ago. The cause of the fires is not known.

### PORTABLE SETTLERS

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said a small military settlement near Nablus will be converted into a civilian settlement. The radio said the settlers who live there now, about five Jewish families, used to live in a nearby area.

### NO EXIT FOR WEST BANKERS

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said all West Bankers travelling across the bridges to Jordan were turned back around 11:00 am, following the grenade explosion in Jerusalem.

### ANTI-ARAB GRAFFITI IN RAMALLAH

TEL AVIV — Anti-Arab slogans appeared on school walls in Ramallah. One slogan said 'Death to the Children of the PLO.' At Aziz Shaheen School for Girls, in Ramallah, Israeli flags were raised during the night. The students took them down the next day and protested to the police.

### ANSAR POW IN ISRAELI PRISON

NAZARETH — Lawyer Walid Fahoum asked the Israel defence ministry to explain why it did not release the Ansar camp prisoner Othman Hamdan during the exchange of prisoners with the PLO last year and instead transported him to an Israeli jail.

Lawyer Mohammed Na'amneh asked for a similar explanation on Fadel Rimawi from Ramallah.

**February 28, 1984**

### ORDER NISI ON BUS STATION

TEL AVIV — The Israeli High Court issued an order *nisi* barring the Israeli Defence Minister, the head of the 'civil administration' and Hebron's military governor from doing any work on the old Hebron bus station. The court ordered the military to explain within 30 days why the station is not being used.

The court order came at the request of the Hebron Bus Company and the Muslim *waqf*.

### TAX MEN RAID STORES

WEST BANK — Israeli tax officials raided several West Bank stores and offices including clinics and pharmacies. Store owners, pharmacists and doctors said the tax men confiscated all account books for the past 15 years.

**Business is now slow but satisfactory for Abu Jalal who sells homemade *laban* (yoghurt), *labaneh* (cream cheese), olives and cheese in his small Old City Jerusalem shop. His tax bill this year was an astounding IS338,000 and included new taxes for past years. /AO**

### PRIEST FILES SUIT

NAZARETH — Anglican minister Reah Abu Assal, from Nazareth, will ask the court next week to cancel a military order from 1967 banning him from entering the West Bank.

Abu Assal will meet today with his Nazareth lawyer, Aziz Shehadeh, and the police commander of Nazareth to protest a police action last week in which police raided offices of the Voice Society and confiscated its books and files.

### RARE ACQUITTAL

NABLUS — Four youths were acquitted by the Nablus military court of charges of throwing a firebomb at a military vehicle in Qalqiliya. The four youths are: Iyyad Saleh, Iyyad Othman, Nidal Daoud and Malik Fawzi.

**February 29, 1984**

### YOUTHS JAILED

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Ussama Ahmad Najjar, a student from Fawwar camp, near Hebron, to prison for one year, with two years suspended. Two other Fawwar residents were also imprisoned: Mohammed Abd al-Qader Derbashi was sentenced to eight months and Jibril Rahneh received a 10-month sentence. All were charged with membership in a banned organisation and making firebombs.

A Dura resident, Nasser Amro, was also given an 18-month prison term with equal time suspended.

### BRIDGE OPEN TO OVER-40S

TEL AVIV — Only West Bank residents over 40 years of age were allowed to travel across the Allenby Bridge to Amman. The bridge was closed for two days to all departing travel following an explosion in West Jerusalem.

### ARROUB STUDENTS JOIN STRIKE

ARROUB — Students of Arroub Camp Institute struck in support of other students of the UNRWA schools who are on strike to protest the comprehensive exams.

### NAZARETH SHOPS TARGETTED

NAZARETH — Officials of the Israeli Citrus Marketing Council raided several vegetable shops in Nazareth and confiscated citrus products on the pretext the shop-owners did not have permits to sell them.

West Bank and Gaza citrus products are barred by Israeli military from being sold within the 'green line'.

Four shops in Nazareth's main market burned down. A complaint was filed with the city police. No cause was given for the fires.

### CITRUS OFFICIAL QUESTIONED

GAZA — The Gaza police summoned Hashem Ata Shawwa, head of the Union of Citrus Growers in Gaza, and questioned him on issuing permits to citrus producers for the sale of their products. The Israeli military bans such permits without their approval.

### NEVE TERTZA IN COURT

JERUSALEM — Five lawyers will file suit at the Israeli High Court against the bad treatment by prison authorities to the political Palestinian women prisoners at Neve Tertza. The lawyers are; Felicia Langer, Lea Tsemel, Abed Assali, Jawad Bulous and Walid Fahoum.

The prisoners at Neve Tertza are not allowed to read newspapers or listen to the radio. They are allowed only one visit every two months by their families while prison laws allow one visit every two weeks.

### LAND FUND

NAZARETH — The Progressive Movement in Nazareth held a meeting recently to discuss the creation of a special Land Fund to help agricultural development in the Arab villages. Each Arab worker will be asked to donate the salary of one working day a year to this fund. They also intend to collect donations from other local institutions.

### BUS STONED

TEL AVIV — An Israeli Egged bus was stoned as it passed near the village of Tara'on, in the lower Galilee.

The paper said this incident occurred about 7:00pm when the bus was on its way from Tiberias to Haifa. Two passengers were reported wounded and bus windows were damaged.

### TRIANGLE HOUSE RAIDED

BAQA AL-GHARBIEH — Israeli police raided the house of Communist Party activist Ibrahim Abd al-Razzaq on the pretext of searching for inciting material. The police also searched three houses of Abd al-Razzaq's brothers for the same reason.

Posters and books were confiscated and Ibrahim was detained for two hours only without being interrogated.

### 4 YEARS OF TOWN ARREST

UM AL-FAHM — For the seventh time, a town arrest order on Raja Aghbarieh, secretary of 'Abna al-Balad' movement, was renewed. The order bans Aghbarieh from leaving the village during the day and his home at night. He also must appear at the local police station daily.

## STUDENT UNDER TOWN ARREST

JERUSALEM — Bir Zeit student Walid Zaqut was placed under town arrest in Gaza for six months, effective last February 23.

## JORDANIAN MEASURES AGAINST PALESTINIANS

JERUSALEM — Visitors from Amman said that several Palestinians from the West Bank who are in Jordan have been arrested and had their passports held by the Jordanian authorities during the past two months.

Hussein Abdallah Manasrah, a student, was one of those arrested. Two 'ormer Ansar camp prisoners had their passports held.

## SENTENCES

NABLUS — The military court in Nablus sentenced Hatim Aqel, from Bidya, to a five-year prison term, half suspended, on charges of throwing a firebomb at an Israeli military vehicle.

Another Palestinian, Tariq Faisal Sawalmeh, a student at Najah University, was given six years, half suspended, on charges of membership in the PFLP, possession of arms and recruiting.

A third Nablus youth, Khalil Assi, was given two years, 20 days in prison and the rest suspended, on charges of membership in a Palestinian organisation.

The defence lawyer for all three was Jawad Bulous.

### March 1, 1984

## TWO YOUTHS JAILED

RAMALLAH — A Jib village youth, Mousa Ahmad Abu Rabah, 16, was sentenced by a Ramallah military court to a two-year prison term and two more years suspended for membership in a Muslim religious organisation.

He was also charged with giving information to the group's members on the location of grenades and ammunition he found in an Israeli kibbutz near Jerusalem where he used to work.

Another Hebron resident, Mohammed Kamal Za'atari, was given a two-and-a-half-year prison term and another 18-month suspended sentence. He was convicted of membership and training in the use of arms.

## PHYSICIAN RETRANSFERRED

BETHLEHEM — The Israeli officer in charge of West Bank health departments ordered the physician Abd al-Aziz Shuqeir to be moved back from the Bethlehem district to Ramallah. Dr. Shuqeir, member of Hebron's elected city council, was transferred to Bethlehem in February.

## TWO NAZARETH YOUTHS ARRESTED

NAZARETH — Two Nazareth youths, Ramzi Baseiuni and Hussam Safi, were arrested on charges of raising the Palestinian flag during demonstrations last year on the anniversary of Sabra and Shatila.

## TEACHERS DEMAND REINSTATEMENT

NAZARETH — Lawyer Walid Fahoum sent a letter to the Israeli officer in charge of education in the West Bank asking that two teachers, Mustafa and Mohammed A'abed, from Kufr Dan, near Jenin, be reinstated to their jobs. Both teachers were dismissed from work after they were detained for one month last January 18 without charge.

## GOATS ARRESTED

DEIR DIBWAN — More than 420 goats grazing in the valleys of the village of Deir Dibwan were confiscated by the military. The owners of the goats were ordered to pay a JD3 fine for each goat. Seventeen goats died in the confiscation process. No reason was given for this action.

## CEMETERY DESECRATED

NAZARETH — Unknown vandals desecrated the Muslim Cemetery in Nazareth, damaging headstones. A delegation of religious dignitaries said 20 graves were vandalised.

### March 2, 1984

## YOUTH HURT IN EXPLOSION

MUSHERFA — A 15-year-old youth was seriously wounded when a explosive device went off as he was trying to move it away from a home in his Arab village of Musherfa, in the Galilee.

The device was found near a home owned by Mahmoud Mousa. Village youths wanted to move it away when it exploded. Two more bombs were found near the place. The villagers charge that the bombs came from military exercises in the area. They demanded that the military find some place else to exercise but were surprised to be informed that the army intends to destroy 50 homes in the village because they say it is a military area.

## HEAVY TAXES

TULKARM — Israeli tax officials raided the shop of Ata Ghanem and imposed a IS1.5 million VAT tax bill on him.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION MEETING

JERICHO — A meeting was held at Jericho's Women's Charitable Association for all instructors in physical and mental rehabilitation schools in the West Bank to discuss advanced methods for helping the handicapped.

### March 3, 1984

## SUSPICIOUS OBJECT

RAMALLAH — Traffic was brought to a standstill on Ramallah's main roads when a suspicious object was found in the city's main square. Police were called to the scene and roads 'ere blocked off. The objec'

### March 4, 1984

## LAWYER CHARGED

GAZA — Gaza Strip lawyer Khalid Qudra was summoned by Khan Yunis police and charged with possession of banned material.

Qudra, deputy director of the Lawyers Union in Gaza, protested the charge saying that he had no knowledge of the material confiscated last month from his Gaza office since he has been under town arrest in Khan Yunis since December 27. He said he has not left Khan Yunis for Gaza except when he had to appear in court.

## IS1.5 MILLION PROPERTY TAX

JERUSALEM — Shufat village resident Adnan Musa A'ayad was ordered to pay IS1.5 million in property tax for land confiscated by the military government last year. A'ayad, an electrician, lost his 35-dunum plot of land in March.

## TOWN ARREST RENEWED

JERUSALEM — A town arrest order imposed on Jerusalem resident Faysal Husseini, director of the Arab Studies' Centre, was renewed for six more months. This is the fifth renewal order. Husseini has to appear at the police station every morning and is not allowed to leave his home at night.

## SHARON URGES MORE SETTLEMENTS

TEL AVIV — Minister without portfolio Ariel Sharon urged more settlement building in West Bank cities. Sharon alleged, speaking to the Council of Settlements in the West Bank, that unless this happens Palestinian resistance will grow in West Bank cities.

## BROTHERS SENTENCED

SAKHNIN — Salah Awad Badarneh, from the Galilee village of Sakhin, was sentenced to eight months in prison on charges of demonstrating on the anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres last September. Badarneh has been in detention since last December.

Badarneh's brother, Ziad, was sentenced to 15 days in prison on similar charges. He was arrested last Thursday.

Issa Fawzi and his mother stand in front of their Anata home which is threatened with confiscation by Israeli authorities. /AO

## FARA'A PRISONER COMPLAINS TO ICRC

NAZARETH — Fara'a prisoner Nasser Sa'ad al-Din Qatami complained to the International Committee of the Red Cross of bad treatment by the prison authorities during his detention. Qatami suffered from skin disease while in prison and was refused medical treatment.

## WRITERS MEET

NAZARETH — A meeting of Palestinian writers and literary experts was held at the YMCA in Nazareth to celebrate the production of the first issue of the new literary magazine *al-Mawakib*.

## SHEPHERDS RESTRICTED

JERUSALEM — Shepherds from Arab al-Sawahreh were barred by an Israeli environmental agency from using fields that belong to them under the pretext of preserving the environment and keeping it only for hunting. The Israeli military had earlier barred the shepherds from using the same area under the claim it was a military area.

## SEVEN ARRABEH YOUTHS JAILED

HAIFA — Seven youths from the village of Arrabeh received prison terms ranging between one and five years on charges which included sabotaging water pipes to Israeli settlements and raising the Palestinian flag.

## HOME DEMOLISHED

NABLUS — A house owned by Isma'il Khalil Isma'il in Lower Beit Or was demolished by the Israeli military under the pretext the owner did not have a license. Isma'il's 11-member family is now left without shelter.

A scene from "Clowns", a student production presented at Friends Girls School, Ramallah, March 3. /AO

*Beit Ummar kindergarten run by Women's Social Work Committee*

# Woman Power in Palestine

by Nura Sus

The Palestinian women's movement in the occupied territories, young but growing in all major towns and many villages and refugee camps, has carved out for itself important areas of activity in the social and cultural fields. Over the past year, especially, women's groups in the West Bank and Gaza have been visited by friends in solidarity, students and researchers seeking to know more about the local feminist movement, its orientation, organisation, methods and projects.

Four women's organisations are active in the occupied territories — the Women's Work Committee, the Working Women's Committee, the Palestinian Women's Committee and the Women's Committee for Social Work. Although each has a different approach, all four are committed to similar activities: sewing and literacy classes, kindergartens and children's day care, medical clinics and health education, folkloric bazaars and annual Women's Day celebrations.

There have been proposals for the fusing of the various groups into a united women's movement, which has yet to materialise. But, unique to other Palestinian national institutions, the women's committees now hold weekly meetings to coordinate efforts and plan joint events. They staged combined demonstrations in 1983-84 to protest an Israeli ministrial plan to move the refugee camps and to express solidarity with striking women prisoners in Neve Tertza. Other coordinated work has been done on cases of women under town arrest, in association with an Israeli anti-Zionist women's group.

The task of organising women for collective interests and leading them to organise themselves is hard and slow work, committee members say, especially where traditional, patriarchial traditions pull strongest — in tight, family-oriented, religious communities where women have only played traditional roles of wife and mother. Encouraging women to break away from a dependent life is possible only by providing alternatives; thus the women's committees try to complement one activity by another: child care frees women to leave the home to attend self-improvement classes; sewing classes can give women a basic skill for outside jobs; and health information helps self-reliance.

In this week's issue *Al Fajr* surveys the 1983-84 projects of two larger women's groups which, not coincidentally, have been active the longest — the Women's Work Committee and the Working Women's Committee (Union of Palestinian Committees for Women Workers).

*(More on page 13)*

The Women's Work Committee, launched in 1978, was the first of the alternative women's organisations in the occupied territories. Unlike the more established women's unions and women's charitable associations, the WWC involves workers in action-oriented rather than service-oriented projects and seeks to raise women's consciousness of their social and political world.

WWC local committees opened during the year in Beni Naim, Hai Wadi Iktaileh, Hai Wadi al-Laha and Qalqiliya, bringing the number of local committees to 32. Eight subcommittees were begun in the Nablus area. A second annual issue of *Sawt al-Mara'a* magazine is scheduled for release April 1. Projects over the past year are summarised below:

**Literacy Classes**
Hizmeh
Anata
Hebron
Biddu
Ramallah (6 courses)
Ramun
Beit Illu
Anan

**Kindergartens**
Hizmeh, 65 children
Ram, 45
Ama'ri camp, 32
Jinsafout, 65
Azza camp, 40
Wadi Itkileh, 50
Beit Hanina, 25 (daycare)
Hebron, 25 (daycare)
Beitin
(summer camps)

**Vocational Training ***

**Knitting**
Beit Illu
Kalandia
Ramun
Ram
Beit Sahour
Jenin
Hebron

**Weaving**
Biddu
Beit Anan
Beit Illu

**Pottery**
Beit Anan

**Embroidery**
Jerusalem
Arura
Beit Anan

**Machine Sewing**
Nablus
Fara'a
Tulkarm
Hebron
Hizmeh
Anata

**Medical Clinics**
Ramallah, daily
Nablus, daily
Tulkarm, daily

**First Aid Course**
Nablus, 65 women attended

**Health Care Day**
Arura
Ram
Beit Anan
al-Mashrou
Beit Illu
Jinsafout
Ramun
every WWC kindergarten

* Production centers have opened in Beni Naim (folkloric dresses), Beit Sahour (kindergarten uniforms) and Hizmeh (children's sweaters).

* * *

The Working Women's Committee (Union of Palestinian Committees for Women Workers) celebrates its fourth anniversary March 8. This committee emphasises labour rights for women workers — equal pay, group contracts, sick leave agreements — and job placement for the newly skilled. It has lobbied with over 100 employment places to have March 8 designated as a paid holiday for women workers.

During the year the Working Women's Committee opened a toy workshop in Bethlehem, with two employees, which produces educational play material for kindergarten children. The committee also operated recreation centres and summer camps for 500 children and held 40 different exhibitions of folklore, handwork and national products. Over 8000 residents were treated in 150 days of medical work in conjunction with the Union of Medical Relief Committees.

The Working Women's Committee also published, in Arabic, a study of the situation of women in the occupied territories. A summary of their year's projects follows:

**Literacy Classes**
Beit Wazzan, 4 women
Abu Qash, 7
Mukmas, 6
al-Azza camp, 10

**Kindergartens**
Abasan, 35 children
Farka, 30
Abu Qash, 22
Burham, 20 (and a mother's council)
Deir Abu Mashal, 25
Deir Ghassani, 31
Mukmas, 35
Dheisheh, 20

**Vocational Training**

**Embroidery**
Abasan, 10 women
Bethlehem, 20
al-Azza
Dheisheh

**Knitting**
Farka, 10

**Sewing**
al-Azza camp, 30
Atara, 5
Abu Qash, 12
Deir Ghassani, 11
Deir Ghassani (advanced), 9

**KG Teachers' Qualification**
Jerusalem, 28

**First Aid**
Abu Qash, 14

**Clinics (free or nominal)**
Dheisheh, weekly
al-Azza camp, weekly
Dyuk, biweekly